TESTIMONY
R. P. CHURCH,
IRELAND.

TESTIMONY

OF THE

REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN

CHURCH

IN IRELAND.

PART I.—HISTORICAL.

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INTRODUCTION.

In the inspired Word the Church is described as "the pillar and ground of the truth." By this designation the Holy Spirit clearly indicates that one leading purpose for which the church was originally instituted, and for which she still exists in the world, is, that she may be the depository of divine truth, and the instrument of its preservation and diffusion. The manifestation of the divine glory, the salvation of souls, and the promotion of man's earthly interests are all inseparably connected with the faithful and efficient discharge of the church's functions, as "the pillar and ground of the truth."

In order to accomplish this great and noble object of her organization, it is essentially requisite that the church should publicly and unitedly make confession of her faith, and bear an open testimony against the errors by which it is opposed. Her duty to "buy the truth and sell it not," to "contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints," is of constant and paramount obligation.

The Church's confession should be drawn out of the inspired Word, and be in manifest accordance with it. The doctrines should be presented in systematic arrangement, and should express, in perspicuous language, the sense in which the church understands the teachings of the Bible.

Such a confession, though framed by fallible men, and necessarily expressed in uninspired words, ought not to be regarded as destitute of subordinate authority in the church. While expressly maintaining the supremacy and sufficiency of Holy Scripture, and faithfully exhibiting and applying this infallible rule, there is no rational ground for representing it as designed to supersede, or as

actually superseding the supreme standard. A Scriptural Confession thus presenting a connected system of truth and duty, is of great practical importance in guiding inquirers, and in serving as a bond of union in faith and profession: and, when honestly applied, it constitutes the most effective means of detecting and exposing error. The church is thus preserved from the changes that are incident to human opinion, and the heritage of truth is transmitted unimpaired to future generations.

Besides emitting a confession of her faith, the church, in carrying out the designs of her mission, is required to present a faithful testimony for the truth, as opposed to error in doctrine and corruption in practice. The Church is represented in the Scriptures as a *Witnessing Society*. Of His ancient people the King of Zion declared—"Ye are my witnesses." The Prophets of old were raised up and endowed with eminent qualifications, to testify on behalf of God, and in opposition to error and defection. The Saviour Himself has the title of the "Faithful and True Witness;" and He expressly declared that the object of His mission into the world was "to bear witness to the truth." This, too, is represented as one of the chief functions of the Spirit; and to Christ's servants is assigned the unspeakable honor of being fellow-witnesses with Him. "When the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of Truth, which proceedeth from the Father, He shall testify of me: and ye shall also bear witness because ye have been with me from the beginning."—John xv., 26, 27. And immediately before His ascension into heaven He said—"Ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."—Acts i., 8. In the book of Revelation, Antipas who, amidst persecution and apostacy, maintained the testimony of Jesus unto blood, is styled Christ's "faithful martyr"—that is, *Witness*: and the succession of faithful and devoted men existing throughout the whole of the Antichristian period are denominated the "Two Witnesses." The labors and sufferings, conflicts and triumphs of these witnesses for Christ furnish the principal

materials of the church's history, from the rise to the final overthrow of the Man of Sin. The church, therefore, as a faithful witness for Christ and His truth, must emit from time to time a Judicial Testimony, explicitly condemning whatever forms of error and corruption may arise. And it is the duty of rulers and ruled in their respective spheres, to realise and unitedly maintain the responsible position assigned them as testimony-bearers for Christ and His cause in the world.

A faithful Testimony is directed against every perversion of revealed doctrine—against all open disobedience to God's authority, and corruption of His ordinances. While maintaining such a testimony against false teachings and ungodly practices, which have had an early origin, and which continue to exist, the church is bound to watch and witness against new evils which may afterwards arise. In order to do this with effect, her testimony must necessarily vary in form and mode of exhibition at different times, so as specially to meet the particular emergency that may call it forth. On this obvious principle, faithful witnesses have, in all ages, adapted their testimony to the evils which it was their duty to oppose. Objecting to this course, on the plea of unswerving adherence to an old Testimony, is both unfaithful and absurd. Without such a testimony the church cannot properly act as a Witnessing Society; and her confession, however Scriptural, will lose much of its practical value. Because of the numbers and power, that in a sinful world are arrayed against the truth, testimony-bearing for Christ and His cause must be peculiarly offensive; and on account of the trials, losses, and reproaches to which faithful witnesses are exposed, few, at any period, may be expected to be thus distinguished. There are, however, always some to whom, according to the Divine promise, grace is given to go forth to Jesus, "without the camp, bearing His reproach." Their work is honorable, its ultimate success certain, and its reward glorious.

The Testimony which is presented in the following pages is specially emitted on behalf of the Covenanted Reformation in Britain and Ireland. Its object is to

declare our cordial and continued adherence to the principles contained in the Westminster Confession and Catechisms, which were designed to be standards of union and uniformity in the British churches. It is a testimony on behalf of reformation both in civil and ecclesiastical matters. When rightly understood, it contains nothing that should be deemed sectarian. The Reformation of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was simply the *revival* of primitive Christianity, freed from accumulated corruptions. In Britain, it was designated "The COVENANTED REFORMATION," because for its promotion the nation voluntarily placed itself under the superadded obligation of an oath. Believing this reformation to have been eminently the work of God, we regard ourselves as laid under special obligations clearly to exhibit its principles, and faithfully to maintain and apply them. The performance of this duty cannot justly be viewed as a means of separating the friends of truth, or of promoting sectarian objects. It should rather be regarded as a Scriptural method of healing divisions in the churches, and of preparing the way for extensive union; inasmuch as the principles exhibited are in accordance with the profession of primitive Christianity and are of universal application—and because the corruptions testified against have been hitherto the greatest obstacles to brotherly fellowship and co-operation. Unscriptural innovations in doctrine and worship have oftentimes necessitated divisions in the church; and it is only by renouncing these, and returning to the good old way in principle and practice, that the primitive oneness in faith and love can be again realised. Surely the judicial proclamation of Divine truth, as contrasted with the errors and defections to which it is opposed, is doing something to expedite the progress of that most desirable consummation predicted in Isaiah lii., 8—"Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice: with the voice together shall they sing: for they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion."

Owing to the prevalence of religious indifference and worldly conformity, there are at present peculiar difficul-

ties in maintaining a faithful testimony for former Scriptural attainments. It must give offence to those whose errors are condemned, and whose conduct is reproved. Besides, in an age of unusual activity, when lax schemes of union are proposed, and are popular throughout the churches, the exhibition of a testimony for truth is reckoned unseasonable and invidious, inasmuch as it brings to a rigorous Scriptural test current opinions and practices, and condemns measures for revival and union that are framed on the compromise of truth, or that countenance corruption in the fellowship and ordinances of the church. Instead, however, of being unsuitable on that account, we regard the emission of a full testimony in behalf of the great doctrines of Britain's Covenanted Reformation as eminently seasonable, and as fitted to subserve the most important and salutary purposes. To remind communities, civil and ecclesiastical, of solemn vows which they have broken or forgotten, and to call them to repentance and reformation, can never cease to be dutiful. Moreover, a banner uplifted for the truth, serves to rally the scattered followers of Christ, as well as to direct and animate them in their warfare with the powers of darkness.

The HISTORICAL PART OF THE TESTIMONY aims to exhibit the various steps by which, through the providence and grace of God, the church has reached her various Scriptural attainments. As the Reformers in Britain stood identified with the witnesses of Christ in former ages and other lands, it is proper that this part of the testimony should contain a brief but distinct reference to the Scriptural contendings of honest confessors, in different periods of the church, both before and at the time of the Reformation. In the nature of the case, a testimony cannot take the place of a full historical narrative, nor, from the imperfection of human knowledge, can perfect accuracy of detail be always secured. Its province is to glance at great leading facts in the church's history—mark Divine interpositions in behalf of the cause of truth and righteousness; and to note the Scriptural measures adopted by God's servants for the attainment

of Scriptural objects, in order to express a judicial approval of them. The attempts of the enemy against the truth —the inroads of error—the parties who adopt or patronise it must be clearly indicated; and an authoritative condemnation of error and defection should be pronounced. Such a testimony is important, in order to mark the degree of progress which the church has already made—the evils that have been overcome—the work yet to be accomplished, and the dangers and enemies that are still to be encountered. Thus the present position of the witnesses for truth is exhibited, and the recorded labours, conflicts, and triumphs of their predecessors serve to encourage them to exercise strong confidence in the ultimate prevalence of Christ's cause on the earth.

The first full Judicial Testimony of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in these lands, after the Revolution, was published in 1761, eighteen years after the constitution of the Reformed Presbytery. The second, which was designed to continue the testimony, and apply it to the state of parties and systems which had afterwards arisen, was emitted by the Reformed Synod in Scotland, in 1839, and adopted by the Synod in Ireland, in 1841. While the Church in Ireland cordially approved of the exhibition of facts and principles given in the historical parts of these Testimonies, it was felt by many from the first, that these documents were much too lengthened, especially in reference to the divisions and controversies in Scotland after the Revolution; and, therefore, less suited to the youth of this church, and others seeking admission to her fellowship. Besides, the space assigned to the history of the progress and trials of the Covenanted cause in Ireland was so limited as to be altogether unsatisfactory to inquirers in this country. The Reformed Presbyterian Church in Ireland is under obligation to utter a distinct testimony against the public evils with which she is surrounded, and to hold forth a "banner because of the truth" to neighbouring churches. Important changes in civil and ecclesiastical society which have occurred since 1841, render it incumbent on us to adapt our Testimony to the church's present position and prospects. While

having a general relationship to the church of Christ in all places, as well as a particular relation to branches of the Reformed Presbyterian Church scattered throughout various countries, we consider ourselves specially bound to show forth the instances of the Lord's peculiar favour and faithfulness to our native land: to acknowledge wherein we, with our fathers, have proved unsteadfast in His covenant: and by lifting up our voice for precious but despised truths, to call back others from courses of defection, and to make known to posterity the testimony and law which God established among us—"That the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born; who should arise, and declare them to their children."—Psalm lxxviii. 6.

HISTORICAL TESTIMONY.

PERIOD I.

FROM THE CREATION TILL THE REFORMATION IN EUROPE, A.D. 1517.

SECTION I. — THE ANTEDILUVIAN, PATRIARCHAL, AND MOSAIC DISPENSATIONS.

FROM the earliest period, in the history of the world, God raised up witnesses for His truth. Abel, Enoch, and Noah, before the flood, bore testimony to the character, perfections, and moral government of the one living and true God—witnessed faithfully against corruption and apostacy—condemned the world for its ungodliness—and, through faith in the Divine promise, declared the only ground of hope for fallen men to be in the perfect righteousness of the Saviour to come. By the call of Abraham, and the promise given to him in God's covenant, the church received a more complete organization than it had previously possessed. It was formally constituted a separate visible Covenant Society, and peculiar privileges were secured to it, till the coming of Christ. The Israelitish patriarchs were chosen witnesses to the unity and truth of God, against prevailing idolatry, and gross and wide-spread immorality. The Patriarchal Dispensation of religion, exemplified, amidst the world's darkness, ungodliness, and misery, the *domestic constitution*, under the controlling power and influence of true religion, as the source of social purity and well-being; and in the Patriarchal rule was also exemplified, the value of civil

authority when in the hands of qualified persons, and exercised according to Divine prescription. Distinguished men, such as Melchizedec, Job, Joseph, Moses and Aaron, were, during this period, raised up, and placed. by Divine Providence, in stations of public influence—that they might bear testimony by words and deeds to important truths of the system of revelation, and might exemplify the power and excellence of great principles that are of unalterable and universal obligation. They bore witness to the truth, holiness, and moral government of God, and to the hope of salvation through a Saviour to come ; and God gave testimony to His grace in his servants, by the influence of their conduct, in their own day, and the power of their example which has been felt in all succeeding generations.

When the law was given at Mount Sinai, the nation of Israel was formally brought into solemn covenant with Jehovah ; and the Church erected in the wilderness was visibly constituted a witnessing society. While in the Mosaic institutions, both civil and ecclesiastical, there were many things of a local and transient nature, evidently not designed for distant ages, and other nations ; yet, as emanating directly from God himself they must ever be regarded as worthy of devout and careful study. From these, and from God's dealings with the Hebrew people, may be clearly deduced important principles, which both reason and Scripture show to be neither local nor temporary in their character. Such are the following:—Nations or commonwealths are subjects of the moral government of God, receiving reward or punishment, according as they obey His will or rebel against His authority. Civil rulers derive their lawful authority from God, while the election of the people is the proper channel through which official power is conveyed ; and those to whom Divine revelation is given, are bound to elect for civil office men having the qualifications which God has prescribed. Civil rulers are bound to frame their laws and regulate their whole administration in accordance with the supreme standard—the Word of God. Nations and their rulers should do homage to the Most High, by formally sur-

rendering themselves to his service—and this surrender should be confirmed by solemn covenant. Such a national covenant, embracing moral duties which the nation owes to God, continues obligatory, notwithstanding the defection and apostacy of a part or the whole of the community. The alliance of Church and State—framed so as to promote the interests of both, without their being blended together, or the one permitted to invade the province of the other, has the Divine sanction; and such an alliance is fitted to advance the cause of true religion and morality, under every dispensation.

During the continuance of the Mosaic economy, a succession of witnesses was raised up, at different times, to testify to the grand principles of the revelation of mercy, and to prepare for the coming of the promised Messiah. Holy men of God declared the unchangeable principles of the Divine government—exhibited the claims of God's law—reproved apostacy and idolatry—and, by the Spirit of Christ within them, testified beforehand of His sufferings and subsequent glory. The reforming princes of Judah called the nation to repentance, purged out idolatry, promoted the cause of true religion, and exemplified, by acts of public renewal, the permanent obligation of the National Covenant. These doings of God's servants were well-pleasing to Him. They are recorded in His Word with ample expressions of Divine approbation: and, arising out of them many precious blessings civil and religious were enjoyed.

Section II.—The Christian Dispensation and its Early Progress.

In the "fulness of the time" the Saviour, who was set up from everlasting, and had been exhibited, from the beginning, in type, and promise, and prophecy, came into the world, obeyed, and suffered; and, by his obedience unto death, made reconciliation between God and men, and brought in an everlasting righteousness. The predicted "Messenger of the Covenant," acted, during His public ministry, as a Witness for the truth—specially bearing

testimony to the doctrine of His Divine Sonship before the judgment-seat of the Jewish High Priest; and to the doctrine of His Royal Headship, at the tribunal of the Roman Governor. These two great articles have formed cardinal points of the confession of Christ's servants in every age. By His death, therefore, the Redeemer became eminently a martyr for the truth, sealing his testimony with his blood: and that testimony was, in the most glorious manner, confirmed by His resurrection.

Before His ascension to glory, the Saviour appointed the apostles and their successors in the ministry of the Gospel, with the faithful members of the Church, to be witnesses for Him, till the end of time, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth. By the descent of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, the Apostles were endued with power from on high, for their arduous work, and abundant success followed their labours. Multitudes were, through the preaching of the Word, brought from darkness to light, and from a state of hatred and hostility were converted to the faith of Christ. Not only among the descendants of Abraham, but likewise among the surrounding nations, was the testimony of the first heralds of the cross to the Godhead, and supreme authority of the Mediator, widely and joyfully received. The Lord visited the Gentiles, and took out of them a people to His name, notwithstanding the combined opposition of Jews, idolaters, and all the powers of darkness. By the manifold labours of Christ's faithful servants, the Gospel of free grace was soon proclaimed and embraced throughout distant nations, and reached even to the isles of our nativity.

With profound gratitude, we desire ever to commemorate the Lord's signal goodness and covenant mercy, in the gift of His well-beloved Son, and in the redemption thereby accomplished. We praise Him for the resurrection and ascension of the Redeemer to glory: and for investing Him with all power in heaven and earth, that the glory of the Godhead might be advanced in the salvation of sinners, and all creatures throughout the universe reduced into subjection to His rightful authority.

And with heartfelt joy, we testify to the grace of the Lord Jesus, in the plentiful effusion and ministration of the Holy Spirit, through which, such numbers were at first awakened and converted—the light of God's salvation shown to the Gentiles, and many brought to relinquish the worship of idols for the service of the living God.

The Testimony of the Apostolic Church embraced the avowal, that Jesus of Nazareth was the Son of the living God, and the promised Messiah; that, by His obedience unto death, the ceremonial law was fulfilled and abolished, and a new and more spiritual dispensation established; that a complete expiation was made for sin, and a perfect and glorious righteousness brought in, on the ground of which alone sinners can be pardoned and accepted; that the ascended Redeemer is now exalted to the Father's right hand, clothed with all power and authority, for the administration of providence and grace, in consequence of which all creatures are bound to serve Him; that the blessings of salvation are to be freely offered to all nations, and that the influence of the Holy Spirit is necessary that men may receive and diffuse them; that the enthroned Mediator must reign till He hath put down all opposing authority and dominion; and that He will come again in glory, at the last day, to judge angels and men—to reward His faithful servants, and to punish the wicked with everlasting destruction.

The church, as organized by the Apostles in accordance with the directions of her ascended Lord, presents a model of doctrine, worship, government and discipline, to all succeeding generations. We testify to the Divine favour in the erection of such a church on the earth, and in granting so full a record of its constitution, government, and ordinances in the inspired history, and in the Apostolic writings. The rule of admission to the fellowship of the primitive Church, was a belief in and confession of the scheme of grace, as revealed in the Word, together with a consistent conversation and a godly practice. The government and order of the church was PRESBYTERIAN. Christ was acknowledged its sole and

exclusive Head: Presbyters, chosen by the people, and ordained according to Christ's appointment, were its rulers; and these consisted of two kinds—the elders, who ruled only, and those who, in addition to ruling, taught, and administered the Word and sacraments. These are the only spiritual officers that Christ has appointed, and to them has been committed all ecclesiastical authority. In the Primitive Church, there were also Deacons, who were chosen by the people, in accordance with Divinely prescribed qualifications, for the purpose of administering the church's temporalities, in order to prevent spiritual officers from being unduly engrossed thereby. This system of government and order, provides for the display of the Redeemer's supreme Headship, the due exercise of ecclesiastical authority, the rights and liberties of the people, and for the unity, combined action, and efficiency of the church in all circumstances. It is, therefore, fitted for universal diffusion, and designed to continue till the Saviour's second coming.

The primitive Apostolic Church was distinguished for unity in the faith, and for purity and simplicity in worship. Its members, called out of the world and separated from the corruptions of the age, were hedged in by a Scriptural discipline, and characterized by holy living. "They continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and in prayers."—Acts ii. 42. They shone as "lights in the world, holding forth the word of life."—Phil. ii. 15, 16. This state of purity and vigour was the fruit of the Spirit's blessed influences upon the church, and it led to zealous and extended missionary labours for the evangelization of the world. The Spirit was poured out from on high in a miraculous manner on the memorable day of Pentecost. Under the enkindling influences of the baptism of fire, primitive believers willingly dedicated their energies and worldly substance for the propagation of the gospel; and notwithstanding the fierce opposition of numerous adversaries, their self-denying and persevering exertions were signally blessed for the diffusion of Divine truth.

The New Testament church was early called to pass

through the fires of severe and protracted persecution. Almost from the ascension of her Divine Founder, till the accession of Constantine—a period of nearly *three hundred years*, she was exposed to the rage of Jewish bigotry and hatred; to popular violence excited and inflamed by the Pagan priesthood; to the keen assaults of heathen philosophers, and to the fierce and barbarous hostility of the secular powers, while, during the same time, she was frequently disturbed by internal heresies and schisms. These trials served, under the gracious and overruling providence of her exalted Head, to test her faith, exhibit the intrinsic excellence of her profession, and, for a lengthened period, to preserve her purity. Though the bush burned, it remained unconsumed, for the Angel of the Lord was in it. The church, in the midst of persecution, grew and extended, until, in less than three centuries, Pagan idolatry, which had been established for ages, and supported by all the power and policy of the Roman State, was overthrown; and on the accession of CONSTANTINE the GREAT, Christianity became the publicly acknowledged religion of the Roman empire.

SECTION III.—CHRISTIANITY UNDER CONSTANTINE AND HIS SUCCESSORS.

The revolution which overthrew the ancient system of Paganism deserves to be commemorated as a seasonable and wonderful interposition of the King of Zion, for the manifestation of His power in the destruction of the church's enemies, and in the extension and establishment of the truth. The subversion of idolatry, and the favour shown to Christianity under Constantine, are generally admitted to be the subject of distinct New Testament prophecy, and may be regarded as a special deliverance to the church, as well as the source of manifold and lasting benefits to the nations. After lengthened conflict and suffering, peace was restored; and by the rapid spread of the Word, and the extension of the Christian ordinances, multitudes were led to embrace the faith of Christ, and to bring forth the fruits of a living Christianity.

The change which took place in the condition of the church, through the policy and interference of Constantine, though in many respects desirable, became, from a variety of causes, the occasion of vast corruption and injury. It would be wrong to represent the political establishment of Christianity at that period as the origin of the great apostacy which speedily followed; for the spirit of Antichrist, we are expressly told, was at work even in the Apostles' days; and, during the second and third centuries, there had taken place extensive departures from Apostolic purity and simplicity, in relation both to doctrine and worship. The ministers of the church, misled by a vain philosophy, and stimulated by worldly ambition, had begun to affect a lordly supremacy, and, to suit their ambitious designs, the lower ecclesiastical offices were either perverted or set aside; discipline also was sadly relaxed; and the lives of the members of the church gave melancholy indications of spiritual declension. But, though the union of the church with the State did not originate the defection and corruption which ensued, yet, being framed in a worldly spirit, and upon wrong principles, it served greatly to promote their rapid and extensive spread. Under the delusive influence of imperial favour, multitudes of ignorant and immoral persons entered the communion of the church; and the riches and distinctions that were lavished on the clergy tended directly to secularize and corrupt them. By assimilating the external form of the church's government to the framework of the empire, a fuller development was given to unscriptural grades in the ministry, while the interference of civil authority, in matters purely religious, weakened and virtually set aside independent ecclesiastical jurisdiction. By these means, the spirituality of the church's character was deeply injured—the original simplicity of her worship was destroyed by pomp and ceremony of human contrivance—a worldly spirit was promoted among her rulers—while the various corruptions of faith and practice, already existing, were greatly aggravated.

The favours which the State now lavished upon the

church speedily developed the hierarchal system of PRELACY, the germs of which had been springing up in the preceding age. In the plan of ecclesiastical government prescribed by the Saviour and His Apostles, there is no authority for exalting one class of church officers to a lordly supremacy over others, or for assigning to those of highest rank the power of exclusive rule and ordination, while preaching and administering the sacraments are to be performed mainly by an inferior order. Nor does the history of the Christian church, for the first three centuries, present an example of an ecclesiastical officer corresponding to the Diocesan Prelate of modern times. But as departure from the primitive faith and Scriptural order progressed, by successive and accelerating steps, a system of government was brought in, which completely supplanted the original Apostolic order. First, to minister to the pride and carnal ambition of the clergy, the office of Ruling Elder was dispensed with—then the Deaconship was advanced from its primitive institution into an order of the hierarchy. The presiding minister of the Presbytery early claimed to hold his appointment in perpetuity, and to exercise supremacy over his brethren; the ministers of the larger cities assumed authority and control over those of the surrounding districts; and, being exalted to a certain rank and honor by the civil power, this assumption of precedence speedily grew into a lordly domination. In this manner, the parity of rulers in Christ's house was destroyed; the liberty of the Christian people to choose their pastors was gradually withdrawn; and the right of all Presbyters to ordain to the ministry was usurped by a particular class, who assumed to be "lords over God's heritage."

SECTION IV. — THE RISE AND PROGRESS OF THE PAPACY, AND OF THE WITNESSES AGAINST IT.

The subversion of the Roman Empire by the irruption of the Northern Barbarians, was the vengeance of the Almighty upon a corrupt power; and its partition by the conquerors into a number of independent states, largely

contributed to the development of the PAPACY. In accordance with New Testament prediction—2 Thess. ii., 6, 8—the grand impediment, "*that which letteth*," had been already taken out of the way; and "that WICKED" had been partially "revealed," whose "coming was after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish." Now, the progress of this system was rapid. The church had in times past contended with the powers of darkness in high places, and with numerous powerful and bloodthirsty enemies in the heathen world. In addition to this, she was thenceforward, till the time of her ultimate and universal triumph, to encounter an organized apostacy which, still retaining the Christian name, manifests Satanic opposition to truth and righteousness. By this most cruel foe and deadly oppressor—"the Man of Sin"—the Antichrist of the last times, the truth as it is in Jesus, on which the church's life and liberty depend, was systematically perverted and obscured; her spiritual worship was polluted by the superstitious rites of heathen idolatry; and her government usurped by a wicked hierarchy, with the Pope at its head. By his monstrous claim of infallible authority, as the pretended vicar of Christ, the laws of God have been set aside, men's consciences reduced to a state of abject submission, the sovereignty of civil rulers and the liberties of nations trampled under foot, and the prerogatives of the Divine Mediator most impiously invaded.

The rise of the Papacy was the consequence of the defections and assumptions that had previously led to the establishment of Prelacy. The Papacy—the "Little Horn" spoken of in the seventh chapter of Daniel's prophecy, sprung up, after the Bishop of Rome had assumed the title of Universal Bishop. It rose to its predicted power by the absorption of three of the ten horns of the Beast from the sea, and by the possession of their temporal sovereignty. In the inscrutable providence of the Mediator, this gross system of lies and corruption, aptly styled in Scripture "the Mystery of

Iniquity," was permitted to unfold itself, until almost all Christendom was reduced to prostrate subjection to its authority, and "the whole world wondered after the Beast." The free use of the Scriptures was prohibited, public worship was celebrated in an unknown tongue, implicit faith in the priesthood was enjoined, no appeal to reason was allowed, and the right of private judgment was imperiously denied. The people thus held in spiritual bondage, and at the same time kept in abject subjection to princes who obsequiously pandered to the the purposes of the Papacy, manifested, almost universally, a blind acquiescence in the extravagant claims of the priesthood, and bowed their necks to the degrading despotism, superstition, and idolatry of Rome. The predestined duration of the power of this wicked system is 1260 years. Its past history has clearly verified the inspired delineations of its character given in God's Word; and whatever portion of the period assigned it may yet remain unexpired, it is likely to afford ample evidence of its unabated hostility to Christ and His truth, and, if opportunity offer, of its former cruelty and reckless disregard of the rights and liberties of mankind.

We record, with profound gratitude and thanksgiving to God that, during the whole past history of the Papacy, faithful witnesses for the truth have been raised up in various European countries, who have borne open testimony against the heresies and usurpation of the Man of Sin. Within the pale of the Western Church, and before the Papal system came into existence, God raised up eminent individuals to testify against heresies that had sprung up to try the faith of many. The contendings of ATHANASIUS, in the fourth century, against the Arian heresy; and in the fifth, the vigorous assaults of VIGILANTIUS upon the strongholds of superstition; and the writings and public teachings of AUGUSTINE against the Pelagian and semi-Pelagian heresies, were not only owned of God for arresting the progress of the most deadly errors, but led also to the embodiment in the church's creed of a clear and systematic view of the doctrine of Scripture on articles of fundamental importance. When

general defection had swept through the Romish church, and its assumption of supremacy was passively submitted to by so many, there were found in various countries, not a few who appeared in defence of truth, and against Anti-christian usurpation. Such were the PAULIKIANS, who spread extensively throughout the East, and those who, under such names as the CATHARI or PURITANS, PATERINES, and PUBLICANI, existed in large numbers in North Italy, and other European countries, witnessing on behalf of God's Word, and against all image worship, superstition, and immorality; and who refused to hold any communion with the Church of Rome.

At an early period, numbers of faithful witnesses for revealed truth, and for Scriptural order and liberty in the church, were raised up in our own favoured land. By unwearied Missionary labours, these men were honored not only to propagate the Gospel of the Saviour's grace in Ireland, but also to establish churches according to the Apostolic model, throughout Scotland and England, and likewise in various countries of Continental Europe. The church planted in Britain and Ireland, in the age immediately succeeding the Apostles, was, for a length of time, preserved from the unscriptural usages that had been adopted at Rome. Men of undoubted eminence and influence, such as PATRICK, COLUMBA, COLUMBANUS, with their distinguished compeers and successors, taught a pure Gospel, multiplied copies of the Word of God, and established churches which long testified against the encroachments and impositions of Popery. When from various civil confusions and changes, Christianity in Britain had decayed, these devoted servants of Christ were the appointed instruments of reviving religion in that country, and of propagating Divine truth among the tribes still remaining in heathenism. The monastic missionary establishments in Iona, and other parts of Scotland, and the North of England, were founded by COLUMBA and his associates from the North of Ireland. The "Presbyter Monks," from Irish Churches, occupied mainly in the copying and study of the Holy Scriptures, in the instruction of youth, and in evangelistic labours, made known evangelical truth

in distant parts of the Continent, and were, for a lengthened period, the lights of the Western world. These persons came to be known and honorably distinguished, on account of their self-denial and unwearying efforts in the cause of Christ, as *Celi-dé* or servants of God, and have been hence familiarly called *Culdees*. Although opposed by the authorities in the church and the regular clergy, they maintained a separate existence in some places till the Reformation. Notwithstanding the attempts of Popish partisans to garble or pervert the monuments of antiquity, there is abundant historical evidence that the early witnesses in Ireland and Britain held firmly the supreme authority of the Word of God, as opposed to Romish tradition, and ever insisted on its general reception. They were substantially Presbyterian in government and discipline, in opposition to the lordly power and precedency claimed by Prelatic Bishops. They were evangelical in sentiment, and decidedly rejected some of the distinguishing errors of Rome, which had begun then to prevail, though they still appear to have remained in nominal but very irregular connection with the Western Church.

Most distinguished, however, among the witnesses for truth in opposition to the errors and idolatry of Popery, during the long dark night of its ascendancy, were the WALDENSES of Piedmont and the ALBIGENSES of the South of France. These had never been in connection with the Church of Rome. Their continuous existence from apostolic times is admitted even by their enemies. So soon as the Anti-christian character of the Papacy became fully developed, they distinctly declared their antagonism to its innovations and corruptions. These noble Confessors held forth the light of God's truth amid the darkness of error and superstition wherewith they were surrounded. With singular self-denial and untiring perseverance, they diffused evangelical doctrine throughout many countries of Europe, and endured severe and frequent persecutions from Popish powers, instigated by the relentless malice of the priests of Rome.

We rejoice in the labours, fidelity, and courage of these

early witnesses. At the time when mystical Babylon was in the height of her power, they openly denounced her as *the Antichrist*, exhibited a visible church wholly unconnected with her communion, and enjoying no small measure of spiritual health and vigour. Their creed was thoroughly evangelical; worship and ordinances among them were kept pure and entire; and the government and discipline of their church were, in their leading features, Presbyterian.

This organized community of distinguished witnesses, all the wrath and power of Satan were unable to destroy. The good hand of their God was upon them; and they were honored, not only to preserve among themselves a faithful testimony against Anti-christian error and idolatry, but to scatter, in several Continental nations, the seed of the Word. By their fidelity, energy, and fortitude, they furnished a noble example to those whom God called in subsequent times, to assail the foundations of the Papal system. Wickliffe, Huss, and the Lollards, derived many of their views of Scriptural truth, and of the corruption and tyranny of the Papacy from the Waldensian witnesses; and the testimony which they in their turn bore to the supreme authority of the Word of God; with their efforts to diffuse the Scriptures—their rejection of the Pope's supremacy—their denunciation of him as Antichrist—and their exposure of the corruption and tyranny of the Romish clergy, served the most valuable purposes at the time, and prepared the way for the revival of primitive Christianity at the era of the Reformation. After the martyrdom of JOHN HUSS, and his companion JEROME of Prague, at the Council of Constance, many of the Bohemians united themselves with the Waldensian Church, adopting a common Confession of faith, and confirming their union by a mutual covenant. This covenant, adapted to the existing state of the church, was ratified with the solemnity of an oath.

We desire ever to bless God for thus raising up and sustaining in different countries, and in the worst times, a competent number of witnesses in behalf of truth, and

against error and apostacy. We praise Him for the grace given them, to lift up a faithful testimony, under the severest sufferings. Though they were not employed to work great deliverance in the earth, yet their testimony and labours had an important influence in preparing the way for the great Reformation ; and shall, doubtless, in days yet to come, contribute to the final overthrow of mystical Babylon. The darkest hour of night often precedes the dawn, so the time of the church's deliverance often immediately follows that of her sorest oppression. When the Papacy was in the zenith of its power —when the witnesses for truth were oppressed, scattered, and crushed, and the kings and kingdoms of the earth were most obsequiously giving their power to the Beast, then the Lord remembered His holy Covenant ; and in the commencement of the sixteenth century, by a revolution, unexpected as it was powerful, the Papacy sustained a terrible shock and partial overthrow, the church was rescued from her long captivity in Babylon, and many nations were called to the enjoyment of Scriptural light and liberty.

PERIOD II.

THE PROTESTANT REFORMATION.

SECTION I.—THE REFORMATION IN EUROPE.

THE Reformation from Popery in the sixteenth century deserves to be commemorated as a glorious display of God's special favour in behalf of His church. By it the human mind was emancipated from the bondage under which it had been held for ages; multitudes were delivered from the superstition and idolatry of the Man of Sin; and the cause of civil and religious liberty was wonderfully advanced. In the providence of the Mediator, remarkable preparations had been made beforehand for this great event. Among these may be enumerated the revival of learning in the West—the invention of printing—the greatly increased intercourse among various nations, resulting from the use of the Mariner's Compass—the weakening of the Romish Church by the great Papal schism, and even by its own enormous corruptions. The testimonies also of faithful witnesses in various countries, though, to a large extent, borne down by iniquitous measures, told powerfully on the public mind—exposed to righteous reprobation the character and doings of the Papacy, and eventually led great numbers openly to reject it. The reformers had been raised up in the bosom of the Romish church, and were eminently fitted for the work to which they were called. The providence and grace of the Redeemer in preparing, amid circumstances so unfavourable, so large a number of instruments, endued with distinguished qualifications for exposing the evils of Popery, and for advancing the cause of pure and undefiled religion, are to be specially admired. They were guided by an unseen hand, and endowed by the

Divine Spirit with an extraordinary measure of zeal and intrepidity. Contemplating, at first, only the removal of some glaring abuses, they were, through the study of the Word of God, led to see the fundamental and incurable evils of the Popish system, and to labour for its entire destruction. Having, through God's gracious providence, obtained the favour of persons who had power to protect them, they went forward boldly from small beginnings, and in the face of the most determined resistance, until, in a short time, the authority of the Papacy was renounced throughout many of the States and free cities of Germany—in parts of Switzerland and France—in the kingdoms of Denmark and Sweden—and by numbers even in Spain and Italy. Besides Luther and his fellows, who were the active instruments of the Reformation in Germany, the hand of God was seen in bringing forward many in other countries to co-operate in the mighty movement. Through the labours of such distinguished servants of Christ as Zuinglius, Farel, and Calvin, in Switzerland and France, the cause of the Reformation was not only extended throughout Europe, but was carried to a greater degree of Scriptural purity than the Reformers in Germany had ever contemplated.

It deserves to be mentioned, with devout commemoration, that there was a remarkable harmony among the Protestant churches, in different countries, at this era, in relation to their protest against Popery, and also to the fundamental articles of a religious profession. This is evidenced in their doctrinal Confessions, and other symbolical books. Differences unhappily sprung up on certain points, between the *Lutherans* and the *Calvinists* or *Reformed*, leaving a breach that still exists; but respecting the authority of the Word, the doctrines of free grace, and the liberty of Christ's church, the Reformers of both classes were one in sentiment and profession. The testimony displayed by witnesses at this period, though mainly directed against the manifold errors and corruptions of the Romish church, embraced the grand articles of the faith of the saints in all ages. The Reformers ably maintained the supreme authority of the Bible—the sinfulness

of human inventions in the worship of God—justification by faith alone, with its kindred doctrines—the right of private judgment, and the glory of the Redeemer as the sole Mediator and Lord of the conscience. These blessed truths were embodied in the doctrinal Confessions of the Reformed churches, and sealed with the blood of many martyrs.

The Protestant Reformation is for ever memorable, not only as a wonderful interposition of Divine power and favour, for the deliverance of the church from lengthened oppression, but also as an eminent and extensive outpouring of the Spirit of truth, restoring Christianity, in a considerable measure, to its primitive purity and efficiency, and leading to the conversion of many souls to God. This blessed work was promoted and consolidated in various places, according to Scriptural institution, and the example of the primitive and Waldensian churches, by means of public religious Covenants. The Lutherans, in 1530, framed the famous League of SMALCALDE, as a bond of union and defence against the Popish enemy; and this was solemnly renewed four years afterwards. On the 20th of July, 1537, the principal articles of the Christian faith and discipline were publicly sworn to by the Senate and people of GENEVA. The Reformed churches of France, when assembled by deputies in their National Synods, generally commenced their proceedings by swearing to and subscribing their Confession and Discipline; and at GAP, in the province of Dauphiny, in 1603, they added to their oath a solemn declaration, that Popery is "the Antichrist"—"the son of perdition," foretold in Scripture. In HUNGARY, also, on several occasions, the Protestants resorted to the same Scriptural and important ordinance for mutual strength and encouragement, and for defence against the unscrupulous attempts of powerful and inveterate foes.

SECTION II.—THE REFORMATION IN ENGLAND AND ITS EXTENSION TO IRELAND.

The Reformation in ENGLAND was begun under circumstances singularly unfavourable. From the very first its character was vitiated by the arbitrary and Erastian measures of the ruling powers, and by the deliberate retention of Popish tenets and observances. The English monarchs did not permit the reformation of the church to be carried out in accordance with the Word of God; but directed and controlled it according to their own caprice, or to suit the objects of their carnal policy. No proper reformation could be expected under the reign of the impure and despostic Henry VIII., who, in rejecting the Pope's headship over the church, arrogated to himself and his successors this anti-christian title and distinction. The Reformation made considerable progress during the brief reign of Edward VI.; but it was destined to a speedy and terrible reverse under the bloody Queen Mary, by whom its friends were subjected to the fiery ordeal of persecution. On the accession of Elizabeth, the Protestant religion was again restored and re-established; yet, through the arbitrary and Erastian measures of the haughty Queen and her counsellors, the want of true Protestant principle on the part of many of the rulers in the State, and the time-serving spirit evinced by several of the leading clergy, the reformation of the National Church remained sadly defective. Popish errors and usages were still retained. Those who contended for purity of doctrine and Scriptural order, known at the time as *Puritans*, were treated with the greatest harshness and injustice, and were ultimately compelled to assume the position of Dissenters from the established communion. So radical are the evils embodied in the constitution and ritual of the English Church, as to render it improbable that they will ever be fully eradicated until the structure itself is overturned.

The Reformed religion was introduced into IRELAND in the same unscriptural manner and under still more unfavourable circumstances. Protestantism became the

established religion of the country, only by the despotic interference and authority of the English Government. Numbers of the Popish clergy were received as ministers into the Protestant Church, without any sufficient renunciation of Popery; the Scriptures were not printed and circulated in the native language; and no proper means were employed for the religious instruction of the people. The subsequent progress of the Reformation in Ireland was sadly arrested and embroiled by the influence of Popish emissaries, who took every advantage which the ignorance and bigoted attachment of the masses of the people to their former idolatry, and which the criminal neglect and frequent mal-administration of the English Government supplied.

We testify against the Prelatical Establishment in England and Ireland, on the ground of unscriptural doctrines and modes of worship, and also on account of the evils embodied in her connection with the State.

While the Thirty-nine Articles, so far as they relate to doctrine, are generally Scriptural and evangelical, and the Article on the Lord's Supper is in accordance with the views of the Reformed, rather than those of the Lutheran churches, there are various statements in the other authorized formularies of the English church, which give countenance to positive and pernicious error. These occur in the Catechism and services for Baptism and Confirmation, the Visitation of the Sick, Burial of the dead and other services. For instance, in answer to the second question of the Catechism of the Church of England, the child is taught to say that in his baptism he was made "a member of Christ, the child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven." In the Baptismal service, the officiating minister employs these words—"We yield thee hearty thanks, most Merciful Father, that it hath pleased Thee to *regenerate* this infant with Thy Holy Spirit." The Popish rite of *Confirmation*, which is administered to all young persons in connection with the Church of England, as soon as "they can say the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments," is wholly without warrant in Scripture. It pro-

ceeds throughout on the false principle of "Baptismal Regeneration." In the service prescribed for the occasion, the following expressions occur:—"Almighty and ever living God, who hast vouchsafed to *regenerate* these Thy servants, by water and the Holy Ghost, and *hast given unto them the forgiveness of all their sins.*" "We make our humble supplications unto Thee for these Thy servants, upon whom (after the example of Thy holy apostles) we have now laid our hands to *certify them* (by this sign) *of Thy favour and gracious goodness towards them.*" In the Burial Service, which completes this series of unscriptural and delusive services, the following expressions are uttered, in reference to every person interred, whatever may have been his previous life and character, those only being excepted who "die unbaptized, or excommunicated, or have laid violent hands upon themselves"—"Forasmuch as it hath pleased God Almighty of His great mercy, to *take unto Himself the soul of our dear brother here departed*, we, therefore, commit his body to the ground, . . . *in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life.*" And again—"We give hearty thanks, for that it hath pleased Thee to deliver this our brother out of the miseries of this sinful world;" and then the prayer is offered—"Raise us from the death of sin into the life of righteousness, that when we shall depart this life, *we may rest in Him, as our hope is this our brother doth.*" There are, likewise, unwarrantable and dangerous expressions in the Priestly Absolution, Ordination, and other services of the Church of England.

The English Liturgy, instead of being conformed to Holy Scripture, or ordered in accordance with primitive simplicity and purity, is deeply corrupted by the retention of Popish forms, and overloaded with sensuous and superstitious ceremonies. The authority ascribed to the church in one of the Articles (the twentieth), to decree "rites and ceremonies in worship," is unscriptural, and its exercise has led to manifold and grievous defections. Uninspired Apocryphal books, containing gross errors and absurd fables, are read promiscuously with the Word of God in public worship. Private baptism—the use

of sponsors, with the prohibition of parents to answer for their own children (canon 29)—the private administration of the Lord's Supper to the sick and dying—kneeling at the altar—bowing at the name of Jesus—the observance of holy-days — instrumental music, with many of the grossest ritualistic accompaniments of Popish worship, are authorized and observed. These evils in the constitution and administration of the National Church of England and Ireland, separate her widely from the other Reformed churches. They have led to the intolerance and bloody persecutions which have marked her past history, and to those counter movements, towards Rome on the one hand, and towards scepticism and open infidelity on the other, that have recently gained so much strength and notoriety within her pale.

Moreover, the Anti-christian hierarchy of the Church of Rome has been retained almost unaltered in the English Church. A clerical aristocracy, whose rank and civil employments are incompatible with a proper discharge of pastoral functions, exists therein, alike unknown to Scripture and to the other Reformed Churches. Multitudes of unfit and unworthy persons are admitted into the ministry, and receive the revenues of the church, while they neglect the duties of their office. The practice of *Simony*, or the buying and selling of ecclesiastical livings, though forbidden by one of the canons, is of frequent and open occurrence. And while the higher clergy have princely incomes, numbers of the lower and more deserving are left in poverty. The ecclesiastical supremacy, which was wrested from the Pope, has been, by the Constitution, made an inherent right of the English Crown. Thus the rulers and nation are involved in the guilt of usurping the royal prerogatives of the Mediator, the church is deprived of her liberty and independence, and is subjected to the degrading thraldom of the civil power. Her creed has been prescribed by the State. The form of her government, the order of worship, her very prayers, both for ordinary and special occasions, and even the apparel of her ministers, are fixed by statute, and no deviation is allowed. Meetings of Convocation are

not encouraged, and when assembled, nothing can be determined without a royal license. The Established Church of England and Ireland is thus the mere creature of the State, modelled according to the will of the civil rulers, having no power of independent self-government, or of ecclesiastical discipline. In consequence, the most ignorant and immoral are admitted to the fellowship of the church, and holy ordinances are profaned.

Section III.—The Reformation in Scotland and the National Covenant.

The work of Reformation in Scotland, from its earliest commencement, and throughout the different stages of its progress, owed little to the favour or support of the State. On the contrary, it was carried forward by the people, already enlightened in the Scriptures, and had often to endure the indifference, if not the inveterate hostility of civil rulers. In the early part of the fifteenth century, some rays of Divine truth began to penetrate the thick darkness that had overspread North Britain. This was effected chiefly by the writings of Wycliffe, and of the Bohemian Reformers which were imported by persons engaged in commerce, or by pious itinerants. The first who were honored to suffer death in Scotland, for their opposition to the Romish apostacy, were James Resby, an Englishman, and Paul Craw, a Bohemian. In the reign of James IV., towards the close of the fifteenth century, a number of persons were prosecuted by the Popish bishops before the king and council, for openly rejecting some of the leading tenets of Popery, though the condemnation sought was not obtained. These were designated the Lollards of Kyle—a district which at an earlier period had received the light of the Gospel through the labours of the Culdees.

In the early part of the sixteenth century, the principles of the Protestant Reformation began to spread to a considerable extent throughout Scotland; and God raised up several eminent witnesses for the truth, whose labours and sufferings were remarkably owned for the

exposure and condemnation of Popish error, and for bringing numbers to the light of the Gospel. Among these, a first place is deservedly assigned to PATRICK HAMILTON, a person of noble rank, and nearly allied to the royal family. Having early embraced the truth, and become extensively acquainted with the Reformers and their principles, from his residence on the Continent during the summer and autumn of 1527, on his return to his native country he powerfully proclaimed the doctrines of free grace, boldly confronted and refuted the errors, and denounced the scandalous lives of the Romish clergy, and the tyranny of the Papacy. His youthful ardour, high rank, and consistent piety, gave weight to his preaching, and produced an impression favourable to the Reformation on the minds of many. On the last day of February, 1528, by order of Archbishop Beaton, he was condemned on a charge of heresy, and burned to death at St. Andrew's, at the age of twenty-eight years. His martyrdom, however, became the means of giving a much wider diffusion to the truth of the Gospel. The preaching of GEORGE WISHART was afterwards remarkably successful, and rendered a blessing to multitudes. After his return to Scotland in 1544, from his banishment in England, he gave himself to apostolic labours, through various parts of the kingdom, and several persons of rank and influence openly espoused the Protestant cause through his instrumentality. On the 2d day of March, 1546, he also suffered martyrdom at St. Andrew's, by the treachery and cruelty of Cardinal Beaton. Soon after, Beaton himself was cut off by what was evidently the just vengeance of God. Whatever may have been the views or motives of those who put him to death, their conduct certainly admits of no justification.

Notwithstanding the sufferings of these servants of Christ, and of other honored confessors, who sealed their testimony with their blood, the truth continued to make progress. The extensive spread of the doctrines of the Reformation on the Continent enabled many who resorted thither from Scotland, either for commerce or for learning, to carry back with them the writings and the

faith of the Reformers. The partial reformation in England, under Henry the Eighth, through the constant intercourse between the two nations, subserved a similar purpose. The policy also of James V., which was to restain the power of the nobility, by leaning for support on the wealth and influence of the Romish clergy, tended to excite the jealousy of the nobles against the priesthood, and thus provided a powerful protection for the Reformers, and opened a way for the advancement of their cause. In the year 1542, at the instance of Robert, Lord Maxwell, the Scottish Parliament enacted, in opposition to the protest of the Popish dignitaries, that "it is lawful for the lieges to read the Bible in the vulgar tongue." This was a most important measure for dispelling Popish darkness, and subverting the power of Rome. Moreover, the persecution under Mary of England, compelling a number of zealous Protestants, and among them several devoted ministers, to flee to Scotland for safety, gave an additional impulse to the spread of the truth. The wrath of man was thus made to praise God; and the iniquitous means resorted to by the Antichristian oppressor, to perpetuate his cruel dominion, and to suppress a testimony for Christ, were made to contribute to the furtherance of the Gospel.

Through the Divine blessing upon the extraordinary labours of JOHN KNOX, who was eminently fitted for the work to which he was called, the reformed doctrines continued rapidly to spread. Returning from the Continent, most opportunely in 1555, when the cause of the Reformation was in a languishing state; when Arran, the Regent, had made defection to the side of Rome, and persecution against the friends of truth was carried on with vigour, the powerful preaching of Knox was the means of awakening multitudes. His heroic and indomitable spirit infused life and courage into the friends of the Reformation, while his singular wisdom served to guide the counsels of the Protestants to measures the most suitable and important. Notwithstanding the opposition of the ruling power, the Gospel was soon embraced by a great part of the nation, including many of the nobility and per-

sons of influence. The friends of truth were first formed into FELLOWSHIP MEETINGS, for prayer and mutual edification; then congregations were organized in various parts, making open profession of the Reformed religion, and having the sacraments dispensed according to Scriptural order and purity. Several who had formerly been members of the Romish priesthood, embraced the Protestant faith, and, by their labours and sufferings, were eminently instrumental in advancing it. The martyrdom of the aged and venerable WALTER MILL, one of this class, on the 28th of April, 1558, when upwards of fourscore, excited general indignation and horror throughout the kingdom, and contributed not a little to fill men's minds with detestation of Popery, and to prepare them for the reception of Scriptural Protestantism. The sinister attempts of the Queen-Regent, Mary of Guise, to suppress the Reformation, and to expel the Reformed ministers, were all seasonably frustrated; and the unexpected return of Knox from Geneva, in 1559, contributed immensely to the success of the Reformers, and to the complete overthrow of the Papacy in Scotland.

A distinguishing feature of the Scottish Reformation, even at this early period, was the spontaneous adoption of the Scriptural and honored practice of SOCIAL RELIGIOUS COVENANTING. To this the Reformers resorted as a means of defence against the machinations of a powerful and unscrupulous enemy, and for the purpose of uniting the friends of truth in a firm and holy brotherhood. The first instance of such Scriptural confederation occurred in 1556, when the greater part of the gentlemen of Mearns made profession of the Reformed religion, by sitting down at the Lord's Table, and entered into a solemn and mutual bond, in which they renounced the Popish communion, and engaged to maintain and promote the pure preaching of the Gospel as Providence should favour them with opportunities. Various similar bonds, adapted to the circumstances of the Protestants, were sworn at Edinburgh, Perth, Stirling, and Leith, in the years 1557, 1559, 1560, 1562, in which they pledged their lives, substance, and reputation, to maintain the liberty of Christ's Gospel.

Scotland having been delivered, by the aid of England, from a French army which had been brought in to suppress the Reformation, a free Parliament was convened in the year 1560. By this Parliament the authority of the Romish Pontiff was renounced, Popery abolished, and the old Scots' Confession of Faith, prepared by the Protestant ministers at their request, publicly ratified. The first GENERAL ASSEMBLY of the Reformed Church of Scotland, consisting of FORTY members, of whom twelve were ministers, was held at the close of the same year; and by it the FIRST BOOK OF DISCIPLINE, defining and fixing the government and order of the church, after a Scriptural and Presbyterian plan, was approved. The majority of the Privy Council subscribed the Book of Discipline, and agreed to aid in carrying out its regulations; and these measures of reformation received the hearty consent and concurrence of the great body of the people. They are thus entitled to be regarded as the expression of the national will. The idolatry, superstition, and spiritual despotism of ages were overthrown; and the church, organized under Sessions, Presbyteries, Synods, and a General Assembly, was established, in purity of doctrine and worship, and in the enjoyment of Christian liberty.

The Reformation in Scotland at this period, though eminently Scriptural and bearing abundant evidence of special Divine favour, yet, owing to the difficult circumstances of the times, contains traces of imperfection. The offices of superintendents and readers, however useful, were avowedly but temporary expedients, and were discontinued when an adequate supply of qualified ministers was obtained. Patronage was not abolished, chiefly because of the influence of the nobles and civil rulers, though all along the Scottish Reformers boldly asserted the right of the Christian people to choose their own pastors. The confused state of affairs during the minority of James VI., and the predilections of that vacillating monarch for Episcopacy, as being favourable to arbitrary rule, opposed powerful obstacles to the free development of the principles of the Reformation. Notwithstanding,

the good work continued to make progress; and the government and order of the church were brought into still fuller conformity to Scripture, even at a time when the Reformers had to struggle against the hostile designs of the Court. In 1578, the SECOND BOOK OF DISCIPLINE, which had been prepared with much care, was approved by the General Assembly; and two years after, a species of Prelacy, which had for a time, through court influence, been obtruded on the church, was condemned and rejected.

But the most memorable step in the progress of the Reformation, was the adoption of the NATIONAL COVENANT. The active efforts made at the time to restore Popery, and the dread of Jesuit plots for the overthrow of the Reformation, furnished the occasion for this important measure. The covenant was prepared, at the king's desire, by John Craig, one of the ministers of Edinburgh, and was designed to be the nation's solemn protest against Popery, and, at the same time, a bond and oath for the maintenance and defence of the reformed faith—pledging those who took it, to "continue in obedience to the doctrine and discipline of the church, as now settled." In the year 1581, the covenant was sworn and subscribed by the king and council; and in the beginning of the following year, it was, by an act of the General Assembly and Privy Council, taken and subscribed with much readiness, by persons of all ranks throughout the kingdom. Thus the principle of Covenanting, which, in the opening of the Reformation, had been repeatedly acted on, was now extended so as to embrace the whole people of the land; and by a deed, which deserves to be regarded as in the fullest sense *National*, rulers and subjects of every class surrendered themselves to God, and solemnly bound themselves and their posterity to the maintenance of the true religion, and to the observance of Scriptural ordinances. The renewed attempt of the king and court to introduce a modified prelacy, only served to awaken faithful men to more determined efforts to preserve their Scriptural freedom, and to advance the Reformation. On the signal

interposition of Providence manifested in 1590, in preserving the country from a Spanish invasion, the National Covenant was again subscribed throughout the nation: and in 1592, the church's intrinsic right to hold ecclesiastical judicatories was ratified by the king and parliament. The Act that sanctioned this power of independent jurisdiction has been termed the "Charter of Presbyterianism;" and though in some of its articles deficient, the passing of it by men, who had been hitherto in a great measure hostile to the church, is evidence enough of the resolute spirit and lofty demands of the Scottish Reformers, and of the blessing of God upon their noble contendings. In the year 1596, the General Assembly, which met in Edinburgh, after suitable acts of humiliation, renewed the National Covenant,—upwards of *Four Hundred* ministers and elders, with uplifted hands, solemnly engaging themselves to be the Lord's, and vowing, in His name, to purge out of the church all internal corruption. The same solemn service was afterwards essayed in the several Synods and Presbyteries, and throughout the parishes of the kingdom, with many indications of the Divine presence and approval. This has been appropriately designated "THE MERIDIAN OF THE FIRST REFORMATION," and was a time of gracious revival to the church in preparation for impending trials.

In reviewing the history of the First or Protestant Reformation in Scotland, we would gratefully acknowledge,—*In the first place*, the manifold tokens of Divine goodness manifested in delivering the nation, in so short a time, from Popish idolatry and oppression; in raising up so many instruments for propagating the truth; in frustrating the schemes of enemies; and in disposing so many persons of rank and power to espouse the cause of the Reformation. *Secondly.* The high degree of Scriptural purity in doctrine and worship to which the Reformed Church of Scotland early attained; the superstitious observances and ceremonies, practised in other Protestant churches, being from the first disallowed, Divine ordinances were restored to their primitive simplicity. "They took not their pattern," says Row, "from any Kirk in

the world; no, not from Geneva itself; but, laying God's Word before them, made Reformation according thereunto, both in doctrine and in discipline." *Thirdly.*—The great care and jealousy which was evinced to have settled in the church a Scriptural and efficient system of discipline, administered by proper ecclesiastical officers, without the control of the civil power. *Fourthly.*—The binding up of Scriptural attainments in church and state by means of solemn covenants. This was not only in accordance with the practice of God's people in former times, but has ever proved an eminent means of resisting the attempts of enemies, and of transmitting the truth to future generations. And, *finally.* The anxiety shown for "the godly upbringing" of youth, by the establishment of Scriptural schools throughout the land; in the thorough training of candidates for the ministry; and in the vigilant superintendence of seminaries by ministers, and courts of the church. All this was productive of the happiest effects. According to the command of inspired prophecy, the gates were opened, that "the righteous nation" that kept the truth might enter in. And thus were the ministry and people prepared to engage in arduous and important efforts for the advancement of Christ's cause, and were enabled to endure the trials and sufferings required in its defence.

PERIOD III.

INTERVAL BETWEEN THE FIRST AND THE SECOND REFORMATION IN SCOTLAND: 1596-1638.

SECTION I. — RENEWED ATTEMPTS TO ESTABLISH PRELACY.

THE Reformation in Scotland, in the first stage of its history, was virulently opposed by the Popish clergy, whose constant intrigues and perverse policy received all encouragement from the civil authorities. When this opposition had been overcome, and the Protestant religion was firmly established, it was forced to struggle against the despotic measures of professedly Protestant rulers, resolutely bent on subjecting the church to the State, and on corrupting the purity of her worship. James VI., while in Scotland, had given many indications of his determination to rule as an absolute monarch, and of his design to render the church a servile instrument in effecting his purpose. The introduction of diocesan Episcopacy seemed to him the readiest means of accomplishing this design. The accession of this monarch to the English throne, in the commencement of the seventeenth century, and his connection with the English bishops, greatly stimulated his efforts to force Prelacy upon the Church and people of Scotland. The three succeeding monarchs of the Stuart line persevered in the same iniquitous course, inflicting immense evils and sufferings on the nation, until, in the righteous judgment of God, the last of them was compelled ignominiously to abdicate the throne.

Partly by craft, and partly by arbitrary interference with the ecclesiastical courts, and by violence towards faithful servants of God, James attempted to overthrow the Scottish Reformation, and laboured to assimilate the govern-

ment and worship of the Church of Scotland to the English Episcopal system. He favoured the Popish party that had always been employed in plotting against the liberties of the nation—interfered in the most dictatorial manner in the election of members for the highest judicatory of the church—prorogued and dissolved its meetings at his pleasure, and banished some of its ablest and most faithful members. High Commission Courts, with unconstitutional and most tyrannical powers, were established, under the presidency of the archbishops. The chief employment of these Protestant inquisitions was to suspend, depose, and banish such Presbyterian ministers as were most determined in resisting Prelatical innovations. By such measures, and by persistent bribery and coercion, he at length obtained, in 1610, the consent of the General Assembly held in Glasgow, to the introduction of Prelacy. And in 1618, in an assembly held in Perth, and composed chiefly of members chosen at the dictation of the Court, a number of Articles were forcibly carried, as introductory to the whole ritualistic system of the English Church—not, however, without the determined resistance of a considerable minority. The *Articles of Perth*, five in number, were — kneeling at the Lord's Supper, private baptism, private communion, the observance of holidays, and confirmation. Three years after, the ratification of these Articles was carried in Parliament by a small majority. This vote, subversive of the Presbyterian Church established in Scotland, was hurriedly taken and carried by men who had formerly sworn most solemnly to maintain it. Saturday, the 4th of August, 1621, a day sadly memorable in the annals of Scotland, "black with man's guilt, and with the frowns of heaven," has been commonly designated on this account the "Black Saturday." The Perth Articles were thenceforward enforced with the utmost rigour by the Court of High Commission, at the command of the king. And because they refused to subscribe them, or to acknowledge the lawfulness of the Perth Assembly, several excellent ministers were expelled from their charges, and visited with severe civil penalties.

While many in the church complied with the arbitrary measures of the Court, and submitted to all Prelatical innovations, we record with gratitude that numbers of pious ministers adhered to their sacred engagements, and cheerfully endured bonds, banishment, and other inflictions in vindication of the Scriptural order and worship formerly established in the land. Moreover, a large proportion of the people cordially sustained the ministers in their testimony and earnest contendings, on behalf of the rights and liberties of the church. These, by frequent meetings for prayer and mutual edification, and by the observance of seasons of united fasting, cultivated a holy fellowship, and encouraged one another to hold fast former Scriptural vows and attainments, and patiently to wait for expected deliverance.

Section II.—Presbyterianism Introduced into the North of Ireland.

The gracious providence of the Redeemer towards our native country at this eventful crisis, in overruling the troubles of the church in Scotland, to promote the introduction and establishment of evangelical truth in Ulster, is deserving of special commemoration

By singular providences, the Lord prepared the field for the ready reception of the seed of the Word. The Reformation in Ireland, as has been shown, was from the first very defective. It did not originate from a knowledge of the Scriptures, or from the diffusion of the principles of the Reformers; nor was any eagerness evinced to obtain the intelligent consent of the people to the change of religion that was introduced. No efficient measures were employed, either for their general education, or for providing them with a sound ministry. Hence a large proportion of the population continued to cling tenaciously to the errors of Popery, and naturally regarded reforming measures, and such as introduced them, with prejudice and dislike. Even those who, in obedience to the commands of the State, had professed Protestantism,

were left in gross spiritual darkness. The clergy were utterly inadequate in number to the necessities of the population, while many of them were grossly ignorant, indolent, and immoral. Church buildings very generally, had been allowed to fall into ruins, and the lands attached to them were often impropriated. Incessant civil wars and frequent invasions had desolated the country, so that much of it was lying uninhabited. On account of the conspiracies and rebellions of the chiefs, immense districts had been forfeited to the Crown, and were now ready to pass into other hands.

In the beginning of the seventeenth century, James I. of England, while by arbitrary measures, forcing Episcopal rites upon the Church of Scotland, was anxious to promote a large scheme of colonization in the forfeited estates in the northern province of Ireland. Great inducements were offered, and considerable liberty of conscience was allowed to emigrants from England and Scotland. In consequence, many families abandoned their homes for more advantageous settlements in Ulster. Among these were not a few who felt heavily the burden of Prelatical tyranny, and who were earnestly concerned about religious freedom, and purity of worship. It deserves to be recorded, also that the Articles of religion, which were enacted by the Convocation of the Irish Church in 1615, and sanctioned by Parliament, were strongly Calvinistic in doctrine. These Articles claimed no power for the church to decree rites and ceremonies; nor was there any allusion to the consecration of Bishops, as a higher order of the clergy. Chiefly through the influence of the learned and pious Ussher, who entertained moderate views of Episcopacy, and whose chief concern was to obtain for the church an evangelical, and competent ministry, but little annoyance was given to those who rejected unscriptural forms of worship. Men who objected conscientiously to ordination by a diocesan bishop, and to the use of the English ceremonies, easily obtained admission to the exercise of their office. Thus the way was opened for the introduction of faithful labourers into Ulster. Several ministers of the

Church of Scotland who had been exposed to persecution because of their opposition to the Perth Articles, were induced, about the year 1620, to repair to the North of Ireland, as an open field of usefulness. Among these the names of Cunningham, Hamilton, Blair, Dunbar, and Livingstone, deserve honorable mention. With some who had preceded them, and others who were afterwards brought to associate with them, these men were privileged to lift up a standard for truth in Ireland, and to plant the Presbyterian Church in Scriptural purity and power.

The number of ministers gradually increased. Godly people from Scotland and England came to settle where they might enjoy Gospel ordinances; and many, through the Divine blessing, derived spiritual benefit through their instrumentality. Throughout a number of the northern counties, the truth spread with power for a period of eighteen or twenty years. Presbyterian churches were established in various places. Great pains were taken to maintain a Scriptural discipline. And through the abundant effusion of the Spirit on the faithful preaching of the Word, the dispensation of the sacraments, and stated meetings for prayer and Christian fellowship, a powerful revival of religion took place, which produced precious and permanent fruits in this country, and extended its influence to the transatlantic provinces of Britain.

Section III.—Increased Oppression under Charles the First.

The accession of Charles I. to the throne of Great Britain and Ireland, in March, 1625, caused to the Presbyterian Church in Scotland greatly increased oppressions. It was, at the same time, the means of arresting the good work, which had been so auspiciously begun in Ireland. Under the insidious and dominant influence of Archbishop Laud, and actuated by extravagant notions of the absolute powers of the Crown, the King and Court entered into the scheme for separating the church of England from all the foreign Reformed churches, and for bringing her nearer to the model of the church of

Rome. The Puritans and other friends of the Reformation in England were systematically discountenanced and opposed. Arminianism and other forms of error were diligently promoted, and various Popish rites, which had been rejected at the Reformation, were more or less openly introduced. The King's arbitrary and unconstitutional measures alienated from him the best portion of his English subjects. The leading Episcopal clergy, however, as usual, gave all support and encouragement to the monarch in his illegal and revolutionary proceedings.

Exposed to the combined attempts of a bigoted despot, a servile court, and Romanising Prelates, the church of Scotland, for a length of time after the accession of Charles, had to endure bitter persecution. Not a few of the nobility and ministers betrayed the cause of Christ, and complied with the demands of the court. The bishops sat as constant moderators in the provincial Synods, and claimed the sole right of ordination. Presbyteries had little encouragement to meet; and for upwards of twenty years, no meeting of the General Assembly was held. The rights and freedom of Parliament were frequently invaded. Intrants to the ministry were required to bind themselves by oath to conform to the established order, and to practise the Perth Articles. Those who succeeded the persecuted and expelled ministers showed the utmost subserviency in spirit, and many of them were extremely vacillating in sentiment. While they exemplified and inculcated slavish obedience to the ruling powers, they were careful to palliate, as far as possible, the errors and superstitious usages sought to be enforced. The High Commission Courts inflicted grievous hardships on all who refused compliance with the existing order, or who expressed dissatisfaction with their arbitrary and tyrannical proceedings. The cup of the church's wrongs and sufferings was full to overflowing. A further daring attempt of the oppressor was made,—the earnest prayers and groans of God's afflicted servants ascended up before Him—the day of vengeance came, and the Lord wrought for His covenanted Zion wonderful and glorious deliverance.

PERIOD IV.

THE SECOND REFORMATION IN SCOTLAND: 1638—49.

SECTION I.—STEPS OF PREPARATION.

LIKE other signal interpositions of the Mediator, on behalf of His church, the deliverance granted to the Reformed Covenanted Church of Scotland, at the memorable period of the Second Reformation, was brought about in a manner most unexpected and surprising. When the right hand of adversaries was greatly exalted, and the friends of truth were sorely tried, so that they almost despaired of the cause of religion and liberty, then the Lord made bare His holy arm, overruled the machinations of enemies, and brought about a Second Reformation in Scotland more full and glorious than that which had preceded, and which, in a short time, extended its benign influence throughout the three kingdoms. The Lord's faithful servants, while under heavy affliction, were themselves made the instruments of this deliverance. For such a work they were prepared not merely by the trials they had endured, but, by the fervent prayers which they continued to offer up, and by the habit of devout waiting on God which they had been led to cultivate.

Faithful ministers, when debarred from the public exercise of their ministry, maintained spiritual intercourse with their flocks in private, and instructed and encouraged them to hold stedfastly the word of the Saviour's patience. Large numbers of godly people throughout the land had manifested the strongest aversion to the intolerance and corrupt ministrations of English Prelacy, and adhered with intelligent conviction to the Scriptural attainments of the Presbyterian Covenanted Church of their Fathers. When other means of redressing the evils which Prelacy

and arbitrary power had inflicted were denied them, they had recourse to united fasting and prayer. Though not permitted publicly to appoint or announce seasons for this exercise, it was customary for a number of ministers, after agreeing to observe the duty, to settle on a suitable day for the purpose; intimation of the arrangement would then be privately conveyed to persons distinguished for piety and public spirit. Thus the people of God had the opportunity of uniting together in occasional concerts for prayer, in which they resolved to give the Lord no rest till He should establish and make Jerusalem a praise in the earth. Such seasons for prayer and fasting occurred once a quarter, or more frequently as there appeared to be a call to the service.

In due time, these earnest prayers were answered in remarkable enlargement to the church, and in the signal discomfiture of her enemies. As the time of deliverance drew nigh, the daring attempts of rulers, and their Prelatical advisers, against the privileges of the church, became more bold and threatening, and everything appeared to promise their entire success. But as in times of old, the hour of densest gloom was found to precede the breaking of the dawn. When the Lord saw that their "power was gone, and there was none shut up or left," it repented Him because of His servants.

Charles and his counsellors had long cherished the favourite project of destroying every vestige of Presbyterianism in Scotland, and of reducing the church to complete conformity to the English Episcopal Liturgy. Laud and others designed at the same time, to remove from the profession of the National Church various distinctive Protestant doctrines, and to introduce in their stead not a little of Arminian and Popish error and superstition. A Liturgy and a Book of Ecclesiastical Canons, which had been long under consideration, were printed, and received the royal sanction, in the end of the year 1636. These Canons abolished at once the whole ecclesiastical polity of the Church of Scotland, exalted to the highest pitch the royal supremacy, made the bishops the judges in all ecclesiastical causes,

and ordained the infliction of the severest penalties on all who refused the use of the Liturgy, or who alleged that aught contained in any of the books enjoined by royal authority was unscriptural, superstitious, or unlawful. The Liturgy which Laud now endeavoured to force on the people of Scotland was generally an imitation of the English Book of Common Prayer, save that in some important particulars—such as prayers for the dead, the service for the communion, and confession of penitents, it was more closely conformed to the Romish Breviary.

The imposition of these innovations by royal authority alone, without any reference either to an ecclesiastical assembly or to Parliament, speedily aroused the independent spirit of the nation. In addition to those who had all along protested against the corruptions that had been brought in, not a few who had hitherto submitted to a modified Episcopacy, were startled from their apathy by measures which were so plainly subversive at once of the religion and liberties of the nation. Only a few ministers at first complained of these Prelatical innovations, and sought from the Council that the introduction of the Service-book should be delayed. But when the King and the Bishops directed that no heed should be given to remonstrance, and that conformity should be rigidly enforced; and when, by an incident apparently trivial, but fraught with important consequences, the observance of the new forms of worship was prevented in one of the churches of Edinburgh, in which it was first attempted to be introduced; and when the attempt was made to drag some of the ministers into the High Commission Court for non-compliance, the spirit of the nation was at length roused to determined and thorough resistance. Large numbers of noblemen, gentlemen, and burgesses, combined with the ministers, for the vindication of their Convenanted privileges. The deputies which were assembled in Edinburgh, continued their meetings under the name of "THE FOUR TABLES," and sought, in a calm and constitutional way, by remonstrance and petition, addressed sometimes to the Privy Council and sometimes to the Court, to have the evils of which they complained

removed. When this proved unavailing, and the infatuated monarch and his council prohibited meetings to petition, declaring them to be conspiracies against the public peace, then The Tables resolved, after earnest deliberation and prayer, and after the example of their ancestors in seasons of similar trial, to adopt the important and decisive step of renewing the National Covenant.

Section II.—The Renovation of the National Covenant.

This venerable Deed which had already served so noble an end, in consummating the First Reformation, was enlarged, and adapted to the state and circumstances of the church and nation, by the addition of two considerable sections. The one was prepared by Archibald Johnston, afterwards Lord Warriston, specifying various acts of former Parliaments, in order to prove that the course taken by the Covenanters was legal and constitutional; and the other by Alexander Henderson, applying the sacred Bond to the condemnation and rejection of all Prelatical innovations. In this part the Covenanters say, "We promise and swear, by the GREAT NAME OF THE LORD OUR GOD, to continue in the profession and obedience of the true religion; and that we shall defend the same, and resist all those contrary errors and corruptions, according to our vocation, and to the uttermost of that power that God hath put in our hands, all the days of our life." And they guardedly declare "that we shall, to the uttermost of our power, stand to the defence of our sovereign, the king, in the defence and preservation of the foresaid true religion, liberties, and laws of the kingdom." It is also solemnly avowed, regarding the original covenant that was now renewed—"That the present and succeeding generations in this land are bound to keep the foresaid national oath and subscription inviolate." The Covenant in this form was taken and sworn with an extraordinary measure of joy, and solemnity in the Grey-

friars Church and graveyard at Edinburgh, on the 1st of March, 1638; and on that and the two subsequent days it was subscribed by sixty thousand persons, amid manifest tokens of the Divine presence and favour. "It may well be said of this day, Great was the day of Jezreel. It was a day wherein the arm of the Lord was revealed; a day wherein the princes of the people were assembled to swear fealty and allegiance to that great King whose name is the Lord of Hosts." The good work was speedily extended throughout all parts of the kingdom, the people everywhere evincing the utmost alacrity in entering into the oath—the Papists and a few adherents of the Bishops alone resisting.

The renovation of the Covenant was followed by the happiest effects. It was at once the means of a remarkable revival of religion throughout the church, and the signal for the overthrow of Episcopacy with the removal of all that had been done for many years towards its establishment. The Covenanters, by the good hand of God upon them, acted with admirable decision and unanimity, demanding at once a free and full General Assembly to redress the grievances of the church, and a meeting of Parliament to rectify disorders in the State. After repeated and urgent applications, the King yielded to the claim of the Scottish church and nation, to convene a General Assembly. This Assembly, met in Glasgow, on the 20th of November, and was presided over by Alexander Henderson. When the royal Commissioner attempted summarily to dissolve it, because of the determination shown to bring the Bishops to trial, it proceeded, after his departure, resolutely to the work for which the members had convened. The Assembly condemned the Five Articles of Perth, the Liturgy and Canons, the Book of Ordination, the High Commission Court, and the civil places and powers of churchmen. Prelacy was rejected as contrary to the Word of God, and as abjured in the National Covenant; and the six corrupt Assemblies by which the Prelatical innovations had been sanctioned were likewise condemned. The greater number of the Bishops, upon trial, were deposed and excommunicated;

and censures were inflicted on the others, according to the offences proved against them. The late renovation of the Covenant was approved of; the Presbyterian form of church-government was restored in completeness and vigour; and the intrinsic power of the Church to convene in her General Assembly yearly, or as often as occasion might require, was asserted. Besides, there were passed many valuable acts, for securing the rights of Church courts, preserving order and discipline, promoting education, preventing the intrusion of ministers, and advancing religious knowledge and godly practice.

Moreover, we record with devout gratitude to God, that the attempts of enemies to arrest and overturn this goodly work were all frustrated. On two occasions, an army was brought down from England to crush the Covenanters, and to effect, by force of arms, the restoration of Prelacy and of absolute power. These efforts, however, proved ineffectual; and the Reformation so auspiciously begun was confirmed and carried forward by succeeding Assemblies, and was ratified by the Parliament in 1640. With the concurrence of the King, who was present at some of its sessions, the National Covenant, with a bond of obedience to the Acts of the former Parliament, was approved of by the Estates in 1641; and an oath was appointed to be taken by every member, before being admitted to his seat, embodying the substance of the Covenant. Although it became afterwards apparent that Charles had acted in this case, as might have been suspected, with duplicity and perfidy, yet the Lord's hand was wonderfully seen in the direction of this great movement. The nation was for the time delivered from the thraldom of arbitrary power. The galling yoke of Prelacy and Erastian supremacy was broken. Exiled ministers were recalled; the comely order of the sanctuary was re-established; the ordinances of religion were dispensed in faithfulness and purity; and by the blessing of the Spirit, very many were awakened, converted, and established in the truth. This was manifestly "the Lord's doing," and was "marvellous" in the eyes of His people. The prelates and their supporters were struck with utter dismay at

the enthusiasm which was kindled over the land by the renovation of the Covenant, and by the blessed results that followed. So appalling did these events appear to the high-handed oppressors of the Church, that Spottiswood, the Archbishop of St. Andrews, exclaimed in despair, "Now, all that we have been doing these thirty years by past is at once thrown down."

Section III.—Troubles in Ireland and England—the Westminster Assembly.

When the Lord was thus manifesting His grace and power unto his servants in Scotland, Presbyterians in the North of Ireland were called to pass through severe and wasting tribulations. By the hostility of the prelates, aided and encouraged by the infatuated and tyrannical policy of civil rulers, the ministers were interfered with in the free exercise of their ministry, and the people were threatened and disturbed in the enjoyment of their wonted privileges. Strafford, the Lord Deputy, required from Presbyterians an oath which, from its odious character and dismal effects, was called the *Black Oath*, abjuring the Covenants, and absolutely pledging them to sustain the King's supremacy, whatever measures he might propose. Afterwards, he planned, by a wicked enactment, to enforce the expulsion from the country of all who would not conform to Prelacy, or who would resist in any way the absolute power of the monarch. The immediate effect of these reckless and persecuting measures was, that the Presbyterian ministers were compelled, for a season, to abandon their chosen field of labour, and take refuge in Scotland. This was graciously over-ruled, in the providence of God, as the means of preserving their lives from the outburst of Popish intolerance and atrocity which soon after followed. In the memorable *Irish Massacre* of 1641, several of the favoured prelatical clergy perished; and large numbers of the Presbyterian community, as well as of other classes of unsuspecting Protestants, were treacherously and inhumanly murdered. Charles I. was earnestly importuned by the Scottish Parliament to send instant

relief to the distressed Protestants in Ireland, but took no effectual steps for this purpose. His inexcusable inaction in such an emergency excited against him deep suspicions of complicity in the Popish outbreak, and tended still farther to alienate from him the confidence of many of his best subjects.

The domineering and intolerant policy of the bishops in religion, and the attempts of the King and Court to wrest from the people their dearest constitutional rights, precipitated in England a civil war between the King and the Parliament. The progress of the reformation in Scotland, and the success of the movement in freeing the nation from prelatical corruption and oppression, roused and encouraged many in England to aspire after a similar reformation. The English Parliament, that directed the affairs of the nation, in opposition to the despotism of the king, soon abolished the High Commission Court and Star Chamber, and expelled the bishops from the House of Lords. They also enacted various salutary measures for the abolition of Popish rites, the removal of unworthy ministers, and for promoting the due observance of religious ordinances. Having publicly declared the Prelatical hierarchy to be "offensive and burdensome to the kingdom, and a great impediment to reformation," and expressed the determination to have established, "a government in the church agreeable to the Word of God," and such as would "bring the church in England into nearer conformity with the church in Scotland, and other Reformed churches," an Assembly of "learned, godly, and judicious divines," was convened for the purpose of advising the Parliament in relation to the reformation of the church in England in doctrine, worship, discipline, and government. The Parliamentary ordinance called together *one hundred and twenty* divines, with *thirty* lay assessors, who had equal power of debating and voting with the divines. The Assembly met at *Westminster*, London, on the 1st of July, 1643, and continued its sessions till 22nd February, 1649, a period of five years, six months, and twenty-two days. Afterwards it acted as a committee for the trial and examination of ministers,

till the 25th of March, 1652. This famous Assembly was not a representative Church court invested with ecclesiastical authority. It was a council convoked by civil rulers, at the express desire of many pious and patriotic men throughout the land, to give advice and assistance in promoting unity and uniformity in the great work of a Scriptural reformation.

Section IV.—The Solemn League and Covenant, and the Westminster Confession.

A joint application, by the English Parliament and the Westminster Assembly, being made in August, 1643, to the Convention of Estates in Scotland, and to the General Assembly—to the one for aid in the war with the king, and to the other for assistance in promoting the reformation of religion—it was agreed between the Committee of Estates and the English Commissioners, that both nations should, at this great crisis, enter into a Solemn League and Covenant embracing the interests, religious and civil, of the Three Kingdoms. A draft, prepared by Alexander Henderson, was, on the same day, adopted by the General Assembly and Convention of Estates in Scotland. This draft, on being presented to the Westminster Assembly, was carefully examined, and, with some slight alterations, was by them cheerfully adopted. Soon afterwards, it was sworn and subscribed by the Assembly of Divines, by the two Houses of Parliament, and by persons of all ranks throughout England, except in places occupied by the royal troops. In Scotland, having been already embraced and ratified by the Assembly and Convention of Estates, it was very cordially taken and subscribed by the great body of the people. In Ireland, notwithstanding the bloody scenes that had so recently been enacted there, and the confusions that still existed, the Covenant was welcomed by many Protestants in the South; and in no part of the nation was it more joyfully hailed, or more generally taken by the inhabitants, than in the province of Ulster. The Covenant and oath of God thus became the foundation for the union and cou-

stitutional liberties of the Three Kingdoms. The Reformation in England was then established on the basis of solemn national dedication to God; even as the Presbyterian doctrine, worship, and order formerly established in Scotland and Ireland had been from the first, accepted on the ground of the National Covenant.

In pursuance of the object contemplated in the Solemn League and Covenant, the Assembly of Divines at Westminster, assisted by Commissioners from the Church of Scotland, drew up from the Word of God a Confession of Faith, Larger and Shorter Catechisms, a Form of Church Government, and Directory for Public Worship. These, after some delay, and with some modifications, received the sanction of the English Parliament. They were received, and after careful examination, adopted by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, according to the qualifications contained in the Acts approving the same, as parts of the Covenanted uniformity in religion betwixt the Churches of Christ in the three kingdoms. The Assembly added a Directory for Secret and Family Worship. In Ireland, the Westminster Standards, with the same qualifications, were accepted as a Scriptural standard of doctrine, and Directory of worship and order in the church.

The declared object of the Solemn League and Covenant—which was to promote uniformity in the profession and practice of true religion in the Three Kingdoms, and unite them indissolubly in the maintenance and defence of the same sacred institutions—was in accordance with the civil treaty between Scotland and England, begun at Ripon in 1640, and concluded at London in the following year. This international engagement explicitly declared that it was brought in for "unity in religion and uniformity in church government, as a special means for preserving peace betwixt the two kingdoms;" and to this both King and Parliament gave their full assent, when the treaty was ratified in 1641. We record our hearty approval of the memorable work of reformation, publicly sworn to by the representatives of the nation and by the people in the Solemn League and Covenant, exhibited as

to its doctrinal principles in the standards of the Westminster Assembly, and largely realized at this period by the public measures of a reforming church and nation, on the following grounds :—

1. The Solemn League and Covenant was a religious Bond, warranted by Scripture precept and example. The matter of it is in accordance with the requirements of God's Word ; and it embraces subjects of the highest importance to the nation. It was urgently called for by the divisions and distractions of these nations at the time, and by the corruptions that extensively prevailed throughout the churches. While it aimed at the preservation of the reformed religion in its purity in Scotland, it sought to secure a like reformation in England and Ireland. Those who entered into it were individually pledged to seek the highest attainments in personal religion. Its end was declared to be, that by the establishment of a happy fraternal union, "the Lord's name might be one in the three kingdoms, and the inhabitants as brethren might live in faith and love." The Solemn League can be charged with persecuting principles only by those who are reckless in their statements or blinded by malice or prejudice. The deed itself expressly states that it is *systems or principles*, and not *persons*, which those who own it are bound to extirpate. History bears unequivocal testimony that, during the time in which those who framed and took the Covenant had supreme power throughout the nation, none suffered in person or liberty on account of their religious opinions. A remarkable blessing in Divine providence rested on the church and nation at this period in healing divisions, foiling the machinations and defeating the designs of embittered enemies, and in promoting Scriptural reformation. We regard the Solemn League and Covenant as throughout moral and Scriptural in its character, and therefore as being of perpetual obligation. Looking forward to the time of promised enlargement, when, through a return to its great principles, the manifold divisions of the reformed churches shall be healed, we confidently anticipate that these nations, in accordance with its spirit and aim, shall again be united in a happy

concord, and true liberty founded on Bible principles shall universally prevail.

2. The doctrinal basis of Reformation exhibited in the Westminster Standards, we regard as eminently deserving of our approval and admiration. The Confession and Catechisms are, in our judgment, the clearest and most comprehensive exhibition of Divine truth that has been emitted by the church since Apostolic times. They are throughout founded upon and agreeable to the sacred Scriptures, and in accordance with the doctrinal symbols of the purest Reformed churches. They clearly and accurately display the mind of God on such precious doctrines as those which relate to the way of Salvation by free grace—the supreme authority of the Word in all matters of faith and worship—the independence and freedom of the church—the character, duties, and ends of civil government, and the obligations to practical godliness. We praise the Lord for His special favour to His servants, in enabling them to draw up so complete a summary of doctrine, and in disposing the judicatories of the church to adopt it as their defined creed and profession of faith. The Westminster Standards have served, to a large extent, to preserve evangelical truth and action in the churches in these and other lands, when the enemy threatened to overspread them with a flood of error. They are fitted to be the instruments of a still more blessed revival of religious knowledge, and to become the rallying point around which the scattered sections of the Protestant church may yet be gathered into one.

Objections against certain statements in the Westminster Confession, as if they contained persecuting and intolerant principles, and sanctioned the exercise of Erastian authority in the church, can not be made except in ignorance of their meaning and of the explanations with which they have been received, or by neglecting to compare one part with the other. In chapter xx. of the Confession, it is declared, that "God alone is Lord of the conscience, and hath left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men, which are in anything contrary to His Word, or beside it, in matters of faith or worship." The proper

bounds of Christian liberty are here admirably defined. It is only licentiousness, or such grossly offensive errors and sins as are contrary to the light of nature, the known principles of Christianity, and the peace and good order of society—and these considered as crimes against the State —that are declared to be proper subjects of magisterial restraint. Lawful authority in Church and State, when exercised according to the Word of God cannot be opposed and contemned under the plea of liberty of conscience. While peaceable subjects may not be punishable by the civil magistrate on account of differences in religious opinions, yet it is plain, from express Scriptural statements, that opinions and practices "contrary to the light of nature, and the known principles of Christianity," openly maintained and followed, so as to be injurious to the peace and good order of society, may be proper subjects for judicial investigation and restraint.

Nor are the statements contained in Chapters xxiii. and xxxi. of the Confession, when candidly considered, justly chargeable with ascribing to the civil ruler an Erastian power in the church. By taking these passages in their proper connection, and comparing one statement with another, it will be seen that the expressions bear no such construction. Though the magistrate "hath authority, and it is his duty to take order, that the church's unity and peace be preserved, that truth be kept pure and entire; blasphemies and heresies be suppressed; and corruptions and abuses in worship and discipline be prevented and reformed;" yet this he is to do, not by the direct exercise of civil authority over the church, or by interference with her internal administration. In the very same section, it is expressly declared that the "civil magistrate may not assume to himself the power of the Keys," that is, authority in the church. The Lord, as King and Head of His church, has "appointed a government in the hand of church officers, distinct from the civil government." It is by means of Synods, and by countenancing and encouraging the ordinary exercise of ecclesiastical rule and discipline, that the civil magistrate is to accomplish the specified ends of his office towards the

church, in the suppression of heresy and blasphemy, the removal of corruption, and the promotion of peace and unity.

The power assigned to the civil magistrate of "calling Synods," being "present at them," and providing that whatsoever is transacted in them be "according to the Word of God," is not to be regarded as an approval of Erastianism, although the language may seem capable of such a construction. The Confession explicitly teaches that to Church-officers alone, and not to magistrates, are committed "the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven." And again, "It belongeth to Synods and Councils ministerially to determine controversies of faith and cases of conscience; to set down rules and directions for the better ordering of the public worship of God and government of His church; to receive complaints in cases of mal-administration, and authoritatively to determine the same." These plain statements contain a full rejection of all Erastian control over the church. The magistrate is to act only by means of proper ecclesiastical courts and officers, and not by dictating to ecclesiastical assemblies, or controlling their free deliberations or decisions. He may lawfully call Synods to "consult and advise about matters of religion," and countenance their proceedings by his presence—not as a judge or arbitrator—but as acknowledging and honoring in his official character the independent government of Christ's house. In the Act of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland (27th Aug., 1647), adopting and ratifying the Confession, and in accordance with which Act alone the Confession has been received by Presbyterian churches, the article in question is thus limited and explained: "It is further declared, That the Assembly understandeth *some* parts of the second article of the thirty-first chapter *only* of kirks not settled or constituted in point of government; and that, although in such kirks a Synod of Ministers and other fit persons may be called by the Magistrate's authority and nomination, without any other call, to consult and advise with about matters of religion; and although likewise the Ministers of Christ, without dele-

gation from their churches, may of themselves, and by virtue of their office, meet together synodically in such kirks not yet constituted, yet neither of these ought to be done in kirks constituted and settled."

3. We regard the more prominent characteristics of the Second Reformation in Scotland, as highly deserving of approbation. The attainments of the former Reformation were freed from unscriptural innovations, and carried to a still higher degree of advancement. The Supreme Headship of Christ Jesus over His church was exhibited and maintained, as a cardinal and essential principle of the Reformation; and the independence of the church in convening her assemblies and exercising spiritual jurisdiction was resolutely maintained. Prelacy, as a system of ecclesiastical rule, with its unscriptural rites of worship was rejected, while Presbyterian government and order were established, not on the ground of expediency or of popular acceptance, but as being manifestly of Divine right and authority — its grand principles being exhibited in the Word of God, and its distinctive usages exemplified by apostolic and primitive practice. At this period, the most jealous concern was manifested by the church in respect to the training and character of candidates for the ministry, and in exacting from ministers the faithful discharge of all official functions. A Divine blessing very observably followed the measures which were adopted to accomplish these important objects—measures which we regard as eminently fitted to promote the efficiency and prosperity of the church, and to advance the cause of pure and undefiled religion.

4. The Reformation of this period extended to the State as well as to the Church. The honest aim of the Reformers was to bring the institutions and polity of the country into comformity with a Scriptural standard, to set up rulers whose lives and official conduct should be in practical subjection to the Word of God, and to exhibit the civil power in proper and friendly alliance with an unfettered Church. They required that the nation, as such, should own allegiance to Messiah, the "Prince

of the kings of the earth," and should assume its position as a "righteous nation keeping the truth." By various national acts, this high and noble end was sought to be realized. Among these may be mentioned the Act of 1640, giving legal settlement to the Reformation in Scotland; the cordial concurrence of the supreme civil powers both in Scotland and England with the Church in approving and sanctioning the Solemn League and Covenant: and the various Acts passed in 1649, for abolishing lay patronages, establishing the church's liberty and independence, suppressing vice and profaneness, and for excluding from places of power and trust immoral persons, and such as showed themselves to be disaffected to the work of reformation. We have no intention of representing the legal enactments of the Scottish Reformation at this time as being altogether faultless. Some of the Acts both of Assembly and of Parliament, cannot be fully vindicated; and in some instances the penalties provided and sanctioned in them were unduly severe. The peculiar circumstances of the times, however, must be taken into account, in forming a judgment on their public decisions. The peace and morality of the country had to be protected against the attempts of treacherous and turbulent parties who were constantly plotting to produce a reaction. Although some of the reforming laws may be charged with severity, it requires to be stated that these were never put into execution. Nor has the Church ever expressed approbation of all that has been done by Reformers in promoting the cause of God. Nevertheless, we cheerfully acknowledge the excellency of many of the Acts which were passed at that time for ratifying and promoting the work of Reformation. By these enactments, the nation, in its legislative capacity, yielded public homage to the enthroned Mediator, and recognised the supreme authority of His Word. They exhibited the sublime spectacle of "a land married to the Lord and delighted in;" and they were designed to transmit to future generations the precious inheritance of liberty and laws, based upon the unerring dictates of Divine revelation.

Finally, it deserves to be gratefully recorded that an abundant blessing followed the measures adopted by the Church and State for the advancement of true religion. It was a season of wide-spread and powerful revival of godliness in the land. The Spirit was poured out from on high in connection with a full and faithful display of Divine truth, and in furtherance of the zealous exertions both of church courts and civil rulers to maintain a Scriptural discipline, and to promote reformation of manners. The power of godliness was at this period manifestly and extensively prevalent, and it continued to flourish till the Presbyterian system was overturned at the Restoration.

While we would guard against representing the Second Reformation as free from defect or blemish, or as having thoroughly carried out, in a time so trying and eventful, all the great principles of our testimony, we freely accord to it our hearty approval, as exhibiting a Scriptural platform, both of ecclesiastical and civil polity, to which the nation, and the churches therein, are under the highest obligation perpetually to adhere. The very brief period, during which the nation continued to avow and practically apply the principles of the Reformation, before these were rudely assailed and set aside, was insufficient to display fully its excellence, or bring its blessed and glorious fruits to maturity; yet enough was accomplished to show that it was a work eminently approved and blessed by God. The present duty of the church and the nation is manifestly to acknowledge and retrace steps of defection from the solemn engagements and decisions of that memorable period in the history of the country. As witnesses for Christ they should hold fast and display all former Scriptural attainments; and, taking their stand on the highest tenable ground of the Second Reformation, be constantly advancing towards perfection.

PERIOD V.

FROM THE REFORMATION TO THE REVOLUTION: 1649—1688.

SECTION I.—DEFECTION IN ENGLAND AND SCOTLAND.

THROUGH the malice and power of the great adversary, the beauty and completeness of the Covenanted Reformation were speedily marred, and the carved work of the sanctuary broken down. England and Scotland both dealt deceitfully in God's covenant, and, as the reward of their apostacy, were left to walk vainly in counsels of their own.

The first breach of the sacred engagements which bound these Three Kingdoms in covenant to God, and to one another, is chargeable against England. In a season of commotion and distress, the English nation appeared to be zealous in the cause of reformation; but when the danger which threatened their civil liberties seemed to be past, they forgot God's mighty works, and treacherously departed from covenant obligations. Even in the Westminster Assembly, while all the members were agreed in relation to the great fundamental doctrines of the Christian system, there were parties who, holding extreme views concerning the government and discipline of the church, and the province of the magistrate in ecclesiastical affairs, could not be expected heartily to promote the establishment of a Presbyterian system of church polity. The INDEPENDENTS held that every congregation forms a complete church within itself; that there is no warrant in Scripture for ecclesiastical courts, whether congregational or presbyterial, exercising judicial authority; but that all causes relating to the interests of religion should

be submitted solely to the judgment of the assembled church membership. The ERASTIANS, on the other hand, maintained that all ecclesiastical government and power are derived from the State ; and that these are to be ordered by the civil magistracy according as expediency and the peculiar circumstances of the church may require. These parties, although they had solemnly vowed to "endeavour the preservation of the reformed religion in the Church of Scotland—in discipline and government," and to "bring the churches in the Three Kingdoms to the nearest conjunction and uniformity in religion and form of church government," tried to obstruct and thwart the measures which the majority of the Assembly and of the nation sought to promote, and adopted courses wholly irreconcilable with the aim of national uniformity. The English Parliament, yielding to the influence of the Erastian party, delayed the national settlement of religion, and sought to arrogate to itself much of the supremacy which had just been wrested from the king. It refused full sanction to the Westminster Standards ; interfered with the exercise of ecclesiastical discipline ; and while approving of Presbyterian order and government, so restricted its exercise, as to hinder its full development and efficiency, and to give just cause of offence to its advocates and supporters.

The general disintegration caused by the prevalence of Independent sentiments, and the irregularities which began to appear in public worship—especially in connection with lay preaching and exhorting—combined with the Erastian intermeddling of civil rulers, led to an extraordinary increase and development of new sects and heresies. The influence of the Sectaries in the army and throughout the country speedily produced so great a reaction in public opinion as to prepare the way for the subversion of Presbyterian order, and for the restoration in due time, of strong-handed and despotic Prelacy, with all its attendant evils. The leading men of the new Sectaries having obtained command of the army, seized the King, and, regardless of the protest of the Presbyterians, put him to death. They then dismissed the Assembly of

Divines, suppressed the Long Parliament, gave public countenance to some of the extravagances and heresies which had recently sprung up in the church; and in wanton violation of the spirit and terms of the Solemn League and Covenant, invaded the kingdom of Scotland. These backsliding measures were taken, despite emphatic remonstrances and warnings from faithful and earnest men of all ranks throughout the Three Kingdoms.

Scotland, too, speedily began to make grievous and fatal defection from former Covenanted attainments. The invasion of England in 1648, by an army under the Duke of Hamilton, who had come to an understanding or "*engagement*" with the King regarding the restoration of his authority, was a hasty, and ill-advised measure—in manifest breach of the Solemn League, disapproved of by the more enlightened part of the church and nation, and afterwards condemned both by the General Assembly and by the Parliament. It served to bring defeat and ruin upon its projectors, while it contributed to the destruction of the monarchy and the execution of the King. But a more grievous error was, with the general consent of all parties, committed in the following year, when, six days after his father was beheaded, the Scottish Parliament proclaimed Charles II. King, pledging themselves to the defence of his person and authority, according to the National Covenant and Solemn League. The culpable rashness of this step did not pass unpunished. Notwithstanding his profession of regret for the sins of his parents, and for his own former enmity to the cause of truth, and his solemn vow of adherence to the Covenants, there was every reason to suspect the perfidy of Charles. The Commissioners sent to treat with him at the Hague, and Breda, had palpable evidence of his duplicity and disaffection to the Covenanted cause. To rely on the efficacy of oaths and promises to bind a man about to be invested with supreme power, of whose integrity, piety, or principle, there was no evidence—but an abundance to the contrary—was an inexcusable blunder which cannot be too severely reprehended. The licentiousness and cruelty which uni-

formly characterized the reign of this monarch, naturally sprung from the deliberate and daring hypocrisy with which he entered on his administration. The error of leading men, in Church and State in Scotland at that time,—which was the occasion subsequently of untold calamities and sufferings to the country—was undue attachment to the royal house of Stuart.

Another sad and ominous step of defection was the passing of the PUBLIC RESOLUTIONS. The invasion of England, under the Duke of Hamilton, and the conduct of Scotland in espousing so rashly the cause of Prince Charles, led to a war between the two kingdoms; and in September, 1650, an English army, commanded by Cromwell, gained a decisive victory over the Scottish forces at Dunbar. In order to repair the losses of his army, and doubtless, also, to restore to places of power and trust, those Malignants, Engagers, and others whom, for their notorious immoralities and their open hostility to the Reformation cause, the ACT OF CLASSES had excluded from public service, Charles managed to obtain from the Commission of Assembly the adoption of RESOLUTIONS sanctioning the re-admission of all save those who had been excommunicated, were immoral in their lives, or avowed enemies of the Covenant. In total disregard of these exceptions, the Parliament repealed the *Act of Classes*, and thus facilitated the transference of the administration of public affairs into the hands of unprincipled and ungodly men—men regardless alike of the Divine glory and the true interests of the nation. The authority of the King was thus greatly augmented. The most notorious Malignants and even some who had fought under the banner of Montrose, and who had been twice declared rebels, hastened with hypocritical professions of repentance, to resume their situations in the army and in the public service. "THE PUBLIC RESOLUTIONS" were approved of by the two next General Assemblies, though a formal protest was taken against them by a large and influential minority of the ministers and elders. The majority, who approved of the conduct of the Commission were styled RESOLUTIONERS; the minority, who

condemned it, PROTESTERS or REMONSTRANTS. Hence originated a lamentable schism in the once united and powerful Covenanted Church of Scotland. This continued until, weakened by mutual alienation and vehement contendings, both parties were fiercely assailed and cast into a common furnace of persecution. We express our cordial approval of the stand taken by the Protesters, in opposing the first deliberate and open breach in the bulwarks of the Covenanted Reformation. In resisting the admission to power of the known enemies of truth and righteousness, many of whom afterwards became the ready instruments of tyranny and persecution, they endeavoured to preserve the nation from the guilt and punishment of Covenant-violation. The grand principle for which they contended, that enemies to the truth and men devoid of Scriptural qualifications, should be excluded from places of power in a reformed nation, we regard as self-evident, and as having the most important bearing upon the well-being of the State, as well as upon the interests of the Church. We would do honor to those who witnessed and suffered at such a time for the maintenance of this principle, as we believe that its ascendancy will be found inseparably connected with the prosperity and glory of all the nations of the earth.

The administration of Cromwell, the Lord Protector, in Scotland, was on the whole injurious to ministerial freedom, and considerably obstructed the action of the Courts of the Lord's house. Nevertheless we regard it as a matter of devout gratulation, that under the countenance and protection extended to the Protesters—chiefly because they were believed to be less blindly devoted to the cause of Royalty than the Resolutioners—they were kept from being borne down by ecclesiastical opponents, and were for a time preserved as a faithful and powerful protesting party in the land. During this deplorable season of bitter division and violent controversy within the church, and of interference from without, there were most gratifying tokens of the Divine blessing upon our Covenanted Zion. The Word faithfully preached was accompanied with power in the awakening and conversion of

the souls of many. True godliness continued extensively to flourish; and both in England and Scotland, the system of Presbyterian polity which, in some places, had been only partially established, and was soon rudely opposed, produced, notwithstanding, abundant and satisfactory fruit. In Ireland, the Presbyterian system, in its strictest form, was firmly adhered to during the times of the Commonwealth. The Protestants of this country had, indeed, special grounds of grateful attachment to the Protectorate. It was the instrument of crushing the conspirators, and of effectually delivering the country from the terror of Popish assassins. Yet the active agents of the new Sectaries, which Cromwell used his influence to introduce and establish, found fewer supporters here than in the sister island.

Section II.—The Restoration.

The Restoration of Charles II. to the throne of Great Britain and Ireland, in 1660, marked an epoch of sad and terrible omen to the inhabitants of these lands. It was the guilty but natural result of general defection and gross covenant-breaking, both on the part of England and Scotland; and was followed by consequences the most destructive to the liberties of the nation, and to the peace, purity, and independence of the Church.

The Parliament and people of England wildly welcomed back the profligate and treacherous King, without conditions of any kind. Thus they violated their solemn compact with Scotland, wilfully abandoned the cause of reformation, and, in an evil hour, yielded up their civil liberties into the hands of a selfish and unprincipled tyrant. The Presbyterians, who were the principal party in effecting the restoration, advocated a scheme of comprehension by which Puritans and moderate Episcopalians were to be united in the one National Church Establishment; and to this end they were willing to acknowledge the supremacy of the King over things ecclesiastical as well as civil. This pusillanimous and time-serving policy proved the ruin of the party. Those who desired to adhere to

principle and to solemn covenanted engagements were broken and disheartened — the previously abjured hierarchy was speedily restored, and prelatic rites and ceremonies were re-imposed as imperiously as before. "The House of Commons, which had shown itself blindly, furiously loyal, rushed at once with headlong impetuosity upon Puritanism and the Puritans. The covenant was burned by the hangman—a fit homage, by the basest House of Commons England ever saw, to the loftiest and purest inspiration ever embodied in a political manifesto!"* Upwards of TWO THOUSAND Presbyterian and Congregational ministers were, by the Act of Uniformity, driven from their flocks in one day—the memorable 24th of August, 1662—and under severe penalties were discharged from all exercise of their ministry. Oaths and declarations requiring a renunciation of the Solemn League and Covenant, and enjoining the most abject submission to the royal will were imposed. Presbyterian ministers were required to abjure their ordination, to submit to be again admitted to holy orders by imposition of the hands of the Bishop, to declare the covenant an unlawful oath, and to swear that taking arms against the king, for any cause whatever, was unlawful. All who scrupled to comply with these intolerable dictates of arbitrary power were subjected to innumerable hardships, deprivations, and sufferings. We honor the patience and constancy shown by the Nonconformists in England, under cruel and unrighteous oppression. The boldness and faithfulness with which generally they continued to witness for evangelical truth and Scriptural worship, the meekness and long-suffering gentleness which they displayed in the furnace, were conspicuous evidences of Divine favour vouchsafed to them under the bitterest provocations.

But more mournful and inexcusable still was the headlong defection of Scotland, with its consequent train of evils, at the period of the Restoration. Scriptural attainments had been more fully realized and longer enjoyed in that country than in England, and therefore

* "English Puritanism, Its Character and History." By Peter Bayne, A.M.

the guilt and magnitude of the reaction were so much the greater. The Committee of Estates proceeded at once, by public enactment, to overthrow the goodly fabric of the Presbyterian Church, and to restore Prelacy, placing it in a far higher position than it had ever before occupied in Scotland. In the meeting of Parliament, 1661, an oath of unlimited allegiance and supremacy was required of the members, instead of subscription to the Covenant, which the standing laws of the kingdom demanded. There was passed also the sweeping and infamous ACT RESCISSORY, which removed all the civil securities given to the Church from the year 1633, and by which the Acts of the several Parliaments that granted them were annulled. The ordering and government of the Church was declared to belong to the king, as an inherent right of the crown. Diocesan bishops were restored; the Act of 1592, and all other laws which guaranteed ecclesiastical power to Presbyterian courts, were repealed; the Assembly of Glasgow in 1638 was declared unlawful, and its acts and decisions were cancelled. All the proceedings of Church and State on behalf of reformation from 1638 to 1649 were pronounced rebellious and treasonable; and to enter into leagues or covenants without the consent of the King, or to take up arms against him, under any pretence whatever, was declared to be treasonable and seditious. The Covenants, National and Solemn League, were pronounced unlawful oaths; and all acts, civil or ecclesiastical, approving of and ratifying them were declared null. Such were the fierce and furious Acts by which the Scottish nation, through its rulers, hastened to renounce its sworn allegiance to the reigning Mediator —Acts, some of which, to the lasting reproach both of the rulers in the church and the civil authorities, are permitted to disgrace the Statute-Book of Britain to this day. "It was a mad roaring time," says Bishop Burnet, "full of extravagance: and no wonder it was so, when the men of affairs were almost perpetually drunk."

By these measures there was proffered and guaranteed to an unscrupulous monarch entire supremacy over church and state. No wonder they were followed by a series of

impositions and cruelties, which continued and increased during the reigns of Charles II. and James II., till the race of the Stuarts was at last indignantly hurled from the throne of Britain.. The Solemn League and Covenant was ordered to be publicly burned at Edinburgh, as it had been previously burned at London; and all who owned the obligation of the Covenants were subjected to the penalties of treason. Between THREE AND FOUR HUNDRED ministers of the Established Presbyterian Church were expelled from their parishes at once by an Act of Privy Council. While we lament the deplorable apostacy of the nation in forswearing its sacred and noble vows, we cannot but strongly reprobate the timid and hasty submission of many in the Church to the monarch's unscriptural claims and tyrannical proceedings. From the first both Presbyteries and Synods submissively obeyed the behests of the court, by prosecuting the ministers who had protested against the Public Resolutions. Afterwards, when their meetings were dissolved by the civil power, they only ventured to protest by silent records in their minutes, instead of resolutely and publicly standing up for the independent authority of Christ's house. The ejected ministers generally, in a short time, desisted from preaching; and the great mass of the people apparently complied with the backsliding and persecuting measures of the Parliament, by attending on the ministrations of the worthless incumbents, who now occupied the parish churches.

The first measures of the Presbyterians in Ireland, in reference to the restoration of Charles II., seemed to indicate a determination to hold fast by former decisions and vows. At the Convention assembled in Dublin in February, 1660, for settling the affairs of the kingdom, the Rev. Samuel Cox, one of the Presbyterian ministers of the city, was chosen chaplain; and in a proclamation for the keeping of a public fast, with the causes thereof inserted, which they agreed to emit, *Breach of Covenant* was mentioned as one of the principal reasons. "This fast," writes Adair, "was kept universally where orthodox ministers were settled; and very solemnly in

Christ Church, Dublin, where the whole members of the Convention were present, and in which was kept somewhat of the order used in these times; viz.:—one minister to pray first and preach, and another to pray after sermon a considerable length; in which prayer the whole state of the times was mentioned, and both confessions and petitions were at length insisted on; and thus four ministers carried on the work of the day." The Presbyterian ministers called to the Convention were directed to consult together as to what measures should be proposed for the good of the church. The ministers of Down and Antrim met in Belfast and instructed Mr. Adair, their commissioner, "mainly to endeavour the promoving the work of Reformation; and to guard against episcopal courses on the one hand, and sectarian on the other. Agreeably to his instructions he endeavoured, with the rest of the ministers, that they should propose to the Convention the recommending of the Covenant and the owning of it, and thereafter the renewing of it. Unto this most of them consented." The high prelatical faction in the Convention, however, taking alarm, consulted and agreed to prevent the renovation of the Covenant from being introduced for discussion at any of their meetings. "So that design" says Adair, "was crushed in the bud." In the Address from a Synod held in *Ballymena*, to congratulate the King on his return, they petitioned that religion might be settled "according to the rule of reformation, against popery, prelacy, and heresy, according to the Covenant." When the ministers who were deputed on this service, through the timid advice of brethren in London, departed from their instructions, and made no mention of the Covenant, or of Prelacy, lest they should displease the King, the Synod, on their return, expressed marked displeasure at this omission. "They saw a change and overturning drawing near; and were grieved that the testimony they had given against defection and for the Covenant should have been smothered, and yet they nothing the better dealt with."

The PRELATICAL PERSECUTION which fell with such severity upon the Church in Scotland, and upon the

Nonconformists in England, sorely tried and wasted the less powerful sister Church in Ireland. The honor, indeed, of being the first to suffer for the royal prerogatives of Christ, and the independence of the church, fell to the lot of the Presbyterians in the North of Ireland. Before the Act of Uniformity was passed in England, or the ministers had been ejected from their charges in Scotland, *Sixty-one* ministers, in the province of Ulster, resolutely chose banishment from their pulpits, with innumerable hardships and afflictions, rather than conform to a tyrannical and unscriptural church and relinquish their covenant engagements. *Seven* retained their position and conformed to Prelacy, ignobly sacrificing a good conscience for the sake of ease and worldly advantages.

Section III.—The Persecution in Scotland.

The Persecution in Scotland, which followed the restoration of Charles II., demands special notice, in a testimony on behalf of the Covenanted Reformation, as it strikingly illustrates the grand principles for which Christ's witnesses were called to testify; displays the spirit which faithful confessors should possess; shows clearly the bloody spirit and remorseless character of immoral and Anti-christian civil governments, against which they were compelled openly to protest; and exhibits the sad results of declension and apostacy from Scriptural attainments, affecting injuriously as they do the position and best interests of the church in future generations.

1. The first step towards the utter subversion of the Covenanted Reformation in Scotland, and which paved the way for the terrible persecution that followed, was the passing, in 1661, of the Act of Supremacy, for securing what was termed the *royal prerogative*—in other words, for making the King supreme judge in all matters civil and ecclesiastical. To this was added the Oath of Allegiance, which bound the person taking it to acknowledge and maintain this unlimited power in the King, and made it high treason to deny it. These Acts embody,

in all its simplicity, the principle of the Divine Right of Monarchs, on which it was the ambition of the Stuarts to govern these kingdoms for about one hundred years. Not, however, till after the Restoration, was a Parliament found base enough to forge such an iron and intolerable yoke for the necks of the people, and with wanton servility, to fling down the dear bought liberties of the nation beneath the feet of the profligate and unprincipled despot, whom they had been demented enough to hail back again to the throne. These Acts vested in the King an unqualified supremacy over the church and an absolute sovereignty over the nation. In virtue of this supremacy, the King had the acknowledged right of dictating to the church such forms of government and worship as were most agreeable to his own will, of requiring the renunciation of such professions and covenants as were offensive to his sovereign sense of propriety, and of enforcing these claims upon his subjects with all the power of the nation and with the full round of penalties at the call of unbridled authority. It was, accordingly, in the exercise of this supremacy that the King ordered the full and immediate restoration of the Episcopal hierarchy and ritual, knowing full well that these were contrary to the deepest convictions of the people, and to the most sacred and binding engagements under which human consciences can possibly be brought. Popery, Mohammedanism, or any form of Pagan worship might in the same manner have been enforced upon the nation, had it only been in accordance with his royal will, and had the power at his disposal been considered equal to the task. Without the special consent and permission of the King, it was pronounced to be unlawful to form any association, or hold any meeting, even for the purpose of presenting a supplication or remonstrance; and all "writing, printing, preaching, praying against his Majesty's royal prerogative" were prohibited under severe penalties. To maintain that it is lawful for subjects to offer resistance to the sovereign will of the King, or to take arms against him, for any cause whatever, was declared to be treasonable and rebellious. Such supremacy ignores and tramples under foot the

rights both of God and man. It is the very essence of tyranny and of anti-christianism; and would annihilate at once the right of private judgment, the rights of conscience, and man's responsibility to his Creator. It is alike incompatible with the divine prerogative and dominion of Christ, and with the eternal sovereignty and irreversible judgments of the Most High. This supremacy was the evil fountain from which flowed the bitter waters of persecution and death that overspread the land for *twenty-eight* years. Resistance, at all hazards, to that supremacy, and steadfast adherence to the Covenanted privileges of the nation was the battle-cry of the Covenanters, even when wasted to a handful and chased like partridges on the mountains and moors of their native land. Such was the ground of controversy between the throne and the true witnessing Church of Scotland during the whole period of the "killing times," from the Restoration to the Revolution. In maintaining this terrible conflict, the martyrs had often to bear specific testimony on behalf of the great principles of the Reformation—such as the Divine authority of Presbyterian Church government as contrasted with Prelacy, the exclusive headship of the Lord Jesus Christ over the Church, the supreme authority of the Mediator and of His Written Law over the nation's rulers and institutions, the moral character and perpetual obligation of the Covenants, National and Solemn League, together with the right and duty of subjects, owning the authority of Christ, to resist such civil rulers as usurp His prerogatives, oppress the Church, and trample upon the constitutional rights and liberties of the people. Such was the testimony by which the martyrs overcame, and for which so many "loved not their lives unto the death." Nor was the fearless voice of that testimony silenced, till the nation, which had so madly welcomed the Restoration, rejoiced once more in a Revolution, which drove the tyrant and his prerogative for ever from the soil of Britain.

2. The fatal supremacy with which the restored monarch was invested, by a servile and drunken Parliament, was soon exercised in putting to death the most

honored and faithful servants of Christ to be found in the land. Among the first victims of this irresponsible power were the Marquis of ARGYLE, a noble patriot and a staunch Presbyterian, and the Rev. JAMES GUTHRIE, a man eminent for his piety and public spirit, and a resolute defender of the rights and privileges of the Church of Scotland. The martyrdom of these great and distinguished men was followed by the cutting off, in various ways, of not fewer than *Twenty thousand* Presbyterian witnesses. When the people refused to wait on the ministrations of curates who had been thrust, at the bayonets' point upon their acceptance, and attended meetings conducted by some of the ejected ministers in private houses and in the fields, these meetings, or *Conventicles* as they were termed, were proclaimed by the government to be seditious assemblies, and those who attended them were fined, and otherwise punished in many distressing ways. By the *Bond of Security* masters were made responsible for the attendance of their wives, children, servants, and tenants at the parish churches; and for their withdrawal from the ministrations of the ejected ministers. At length, the atrocity of civil rulers, and their Prelatical abettors, reached its climax, when the punishment of death was denounced against Conventicle preachers and hearers indiscriminately. Refusing compliance with Prelacy, not hearing the curates, rejecting the oath of supremacy, refusing to offer prescribed prayers for the King, or maintaining the lawfulness of defensive arms for the protection of national and religious rights—were declared crimes worthy of instant death. In consequence, peaceful and unoffending persons were stripped of their goods, shot in the fields, dragged before wicked tribunals, where they were jeered at, and subjected to most inquisitorial examinations, accompanied not unfrequently with gratuitous indignities and excruciating tortures, then summarily condemned and executed—a lawless and brutal soldiery often acting at once as their judges and executioners. Bands of military ruffians were quartered on the people, to enforce conformity and submission. A host of savage Highlanders was, at one period, let loose

upon certain disaffected parts of the Lowlands, to crush the spirit of the people, and to hunt down conventicles. We bear our testimony against the merciless and wicked measures resorted to throughout this disastrous period, by the civil rulers in Britain, to suppress the cause of the Covenanted Reformation. They manifested the grossest perfidy, being in flagrant violation of all constitutional engagements and rights, and have been seldom surpassed for cruelty, either in Pagan or Popish persecutions. The slaughter of God's saints, during this time, not having been repented of and confessed by the rulers of these lands, nor duly acknowledged by the nation, yet cries aloud to God for vengeance. When the time of promised deliverance for Zion shall come, the exalted Mediator, who is the Advocate and Avenger of His people, will make inquisition for blood. Judicial and awful retribution will then be meted out to impenitent oppressors, and to all those systems in whose skirts may be found the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.

3. Again, the imposition of sinful oaths, bonds, and declarations, during this period, which were taken by many to escape suffering, involved the land in fearful guilt. Such were the oaths of *Supremacy* and *Allegiance* already referred to; the *Declaration*, also, which contained a formal renunciation of the Covenants, and of the whole work of reformation, and of the right of subjects to resist their rulers on any ground whatever; the self-contradictory and infamous *Test*, by which, while the ecclesiastical supremacy of the King was avowed, a profession was explicitly made of adherence to the Scots' Confession of Faith; the *Bond for heritors; Bond for peace, and for conformity or regularity*, with other iniquitous and ensnaring bonds. Not only were these engagements exacted from persons in office or public employment, but, as the persecution progressed, they came to be imposed at random on all the subjects, especially on those who were known to be pious, or suspected of attachment to the Covenants. Being unwarrantable and profane in the highest degree, they proved utterly depraving to the conscience and morals of the nation.

4. When such measures failed to prevent preaching in the fields, or to deter the people from cleaving to their ejected pastors, ROYAL INDULGENCES were issued, in order, if possible, to entrap them into submission. These were, unhappily, too successful in the case of most Presbyterian ministers. The Indulgences, introduced with so treacherous a design, were wholly evil, and productive of most injurious consequences to the Presbyterian cause. The evident object of them was stealthily to seduce from their principles, and set at variance among themselves the Presbyterian ministers. And this they effectually accomplished. The Indulgences, first and last, sprang from the assumed Royal supremacy in Church and State. The Council that issued them, claimed and exercised the Erastian power of settling and removing ministers at pleasure, of prescribing qualifications for the discharge of ministerial functions, and of limiting their exercise. Moreover, they made these pretended acts of Royal favour the occasion of persecuting to the death, with increased malignity, those who refused them and remained faithful to their Covenant engagements. It is deeply to be deplored that so many Presbyterian ministers in Scotland accepted these Indulgences, offering at first a timid and inadequate protest against the supremacy from which they flowed, but afterwards withholding this self-condemning protestation. The majority of the people, in the day of trial, yielded to the same temptation, and sacrificed a testimony for the Redeemer's royal prerogatives, and the spiritual independence of the Church, to a time-serving and wicked expediency. When, on the death of Charles II., in 1685, his brother, the Duke of York, an avowed and bigoted Papist, ascended the throne, the Parliament of Scotland, utterly recreant to the Protestant cause, did not require him to take the Coronation Oath, but proffered to him, the most abject allegiance, "as holding his imperial crown from God alone." Presuming upon such slavish concessions, James II., out of his absolute prerogative, suspended all disqualifying laws against Papists, and determined to admit them to places of power and trust equally with his other subjects.

In February, 1687, a proclamation was issued, in which his majesty, "by his sovereign authority, prerogative royal, and absolute power, which all his subjects are to obey without reserve, did give and grant his royal toleration to the several professors of the Christian religion." This Act of Toleration granted to "moderate Presbyterians," the exercise of their religion in public and private, except in the open fields, but in a way that disannulled all the securities of Protestantism in the past, and was designed to prepare the way for the complete restoration of Popery. Whilst we condemn the conduct of the Parliaments of England and Scotland, in concurring in the palpable violation of the constitution, and the destruction of the nation's liberties, we likewise condemn in the strongest terms the faithless and time-serving spirit evinced by the great body of the Presbyterian ministers in Scotland, in so readily accepting the royal toleration,—some of them even thanking the king in the most fulsome terms for his gracious clemency in issuing it, and pledging themselves to "entire loyalty in doctrine and practice" for the future. Not only did they betray the Presbyterian cause, by offering no sufficient resistance to encroachments so enormous and fatal, but they assisted persecutors by denouncing and exposing faithful witnesses who refused to succumb to usurpation and tyranny. Thus were the few faithful Covenanters in the land left to endure the concentrated fury of relentless persecution; while the majority furnished an example of subserviency and faithlessness, which even to our own day has not ceased to exert a baneful influence. To Cameron, Cargill, and Renwick, with their noble band of dauntless adherents, belongs the honour of rejecting, promptly and fearlessly, the whole list of royal Indulgences and mock Tolerations. It was they who first proclaimed war against the Papist James as a usurper and tyrant, who had not sworn the Coronation Oath, and had violated the fundamental laws of the kingdom—a proclamation which the British nation soon after espoused as its own.

5. We record the special goodness of God in preserving

a remnant of faithful witnesses during all this period; and in guiding them to measures eminently suitable for maintaining and perpetuating a testimony for truth. They publicly glorified His name by their patience, meekness, and heroic fortitude even in death. We cannot but admire the testimonies left by our covenanted and martyred forefathers to the royal prerogatives of Messiah, the supremacy of His Word, the perpetual obligation of the national vows, the spiritual independence of His Church, and in defence of the constitutional liberties of the nation. We bless God that so many were led thus to stand up for the independence of the ministry and the liberty of the Gospel, and who, rather than abandon the cause of God, jeoparded their lives unto the death in the high places of the field. To the noble testimonies borne against Prelacy, the supremacy of the crown, and on behalf of the rights of God and man, on so many public scaffolds and in the Declarations published at RUTHERGLEN, SANQUAHAR, LANARK, and especially in the "Informatory Vindication," we willingly accord our approbation. We regard them as in the main Scriptural, though prepared under great excitement; and they were owned of God for the preservation and spread of precious truth. They present a noble example of boldness and fidelity to witnessing churches in all subsequent ages. Though not required to vindicate every act of the sufferers, nor to approve of every expression found in the publications which they emitted, yet, admiring the grace given them to be faithful, and the singular wisdom which they evinced in adapting the application of unalterable principles to emergencies as they arose, we cordially subscribe to the great doctrines for which they suffered. Their protestations and testimonies were substantially the same with those of Christ's honored confessors and martyrs in former ages and in other lands. In the death of Cameron, Cargill, and Renwick—the last of this noble band of martyrs—the Lord gave special approval to the cause for which they suffered, in the full assurance of faith which they realized, and in the confident hope which they expressed that the church's deliverance was drawing nigh. But for

their fervent zeal, and unconquerable heroism the dearest privileges of the church had been ignobly surrendered, and the chartered liberties of the nation sacrificed without a struggle.

The appearance in arms at Pentland, Drumclog, Bothwell-Bridge, and Airsmoss, in unpremeditated attempts at necessary, though desperate self-defence, and in vindication of the outraged liberties of the church and nation, we regard as justifiable on the admitted principles of national law, from the examples of God's saints recorded in history, and the noble struggles of such nations as have achieved constitutional freedom. To some, indeed, they may appear to have been rash and inexpedient, inasmuch as they led to increased sufferings and oppression. They served, nevertheless, as a just though unsuccessful protest against the reckless conduct of infatuated rulers, and as an impressive testimony in behalf of principles which the British nation endorsed in the ultimate rejection of the house of Stuart.

Section IV.—Persecution and Defection in Ulster.

At the time of the Restoration, there were *Sixty-eight* ordained ministers settled over large Presbyterian congregations in the North of Ireland, all of whom had either sworn, or previous to their ordination, declared their adherence to, the Solemn League and Covenant. The people in connection with the church were said to amount to *One-hundred-thousand*. The course, however, which was adopted by the majority of the ministers, and by the Church courts in Ireland, in relation to the Public Resolutions some time before, augured ill for the stability of the church in the hour of trial. When some young ministers from Scotland, who had been invited to preach and settle in Ulster, publicly maintained the leading principle of the Protesters—that persons devoid of Scriptural qualifications and hostile to the Covenanted Reformation, should not be admitted to places of power in the nation—"the most of the brethren here, not being of those opinions, did resent the practice as disorderly and dangerous." It was

ordained by the Bangor Act that "there should be no mutual contestings about the differences in Scotland, nor any owning of them on either side in public preaching or prayer, nor in conference among the people as siding with one party more than another." In a further Act it was arranged that the men selected for the planting of the church in this country "should be peaceable—*i. e.*, not violent in either of those ways now debated in Scotland; but whatever were their private thoughts, they should be of that temper as to be submissive to their brethren, and not trouble this church with their opinions. And that none should be admitted but such as should engage and subscribe to the peaceable deportment inculcated in the Act called the 'Act of Bangor'." This time-serving policy, was unworthy the descendants and companions of the men whose grand aim was to subject everything, both in Church and State, to the authority of the reigning Mediator. It deliberately compromised valuable truth, for the sake of external peace and public favour.

The return of CHARLES II. to the throne of his ancestors proved specially disastrous to the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. "A little after," says Adair, who was one of its ministers, "bishops were named for all the vacant dioceses in England and Ireland, for the King did not proceed so suddenly with Scotland. And immediately they set up their public liturgy, altars, bishop's courts—and fell with all haste and diligence to crush faithful ministers. and plant the churches with what others they could get, and to extinguish the remainder of Presbyterian government. The three in the North of Ireland were singularly fitted for that design. The first step the bishops took was to procure the justices to issue forth a proclamation, discharging all Presbyterian meetings. Jeremy Taylor, the Bishop of Down did, in one day declare thirty six churches vacant. He did not make any process against the ministers, nor suspend or excommunicate; but he simply held them not to be ministers, they not being ordained by bishops. The rest of the brethren in other dioceses were dealt with in the same manner in the end, though not with so great haste and violence.

The ministers continued preaching for a while, till it became physically impossible for them to continue ; curates being sent to some places and taking possession of the churches ; others were violently laid hands upon as they were going to their pulpits. Upon this they were all forced to desist from public preaching within two or three months after their places were declared vacant. The old enemies became bitter and triumphed ; and kept a searching and severe eye over the ousted ministers. For generally, they did reside in some places of their parishes, being excluded not only from their maintenance, but from their houses that the parishes had built for ministers—except those houses that were built by themselves, and were their own property. Besides, there were some who had been once of the brethren by profession, and ordained by them, who, now, turning with the times, became more dangerous than others. They were ordained with solemn engagements to adhere to Presbyterian government, the ends of the Covenant, and subordination to their brethren. Notwithstanding in the hour of temptation, and embracing this present world, they renounced the Covenant publicly and their ordination by the Presbytery, and were re-ordained by the bishop. Hereafter they turned other men than before—worldly, proud, severe on the people who discountenanced them, haters of those faithful men who made them ministers, and divers of them profane. By this the authority and virtue of Christ's ordinances and government may be seen, and how Episcopal government is followed with, and gives place unto profaneness and wickedness of all sorts, as the universal experience of these times declared in all the three kingdoms. It's but rare to find a minister among them moral and sober ; and as it is said 'from them profaneness goeth forth out through the land.'

"In May, 1661, there was a Parliament called in Ireland. Favour was showed to certain classes of the Irish, who were pardoned from their former rebellion, and their estates given to them and their posterity. Yet there was no mercy to Presbyterians, but the law was ordered to be executed against them. The Parliament did immediately

establish the former Episcopal Laws of Ireland, such as Bishops, common prayer, &c. And they put forth a declaration or proclamation to this purpose, forbidding all to preach who would not conform, and ordered it to be sent through Ireland to every minister, to be read by him the next Sabbath after his receiving it. This proclamation came before many of the brethren had been otherwise forced to desist, and was on that account particularly sent to them, which strengthened the hands of their opposers. The Parliament of Ireland followed that of England, not only in restoring the former way of government and worship, but in making an Act for burning the Solemn League and Covenant. This was accordingly done in all cities and towns through the kindgom, the magistrates in every place being directors and witnesses, which, as it was pleasing to the Episcopal party and the profane in the land, together with the Papists, so it was a sad mark of the times, and an evil omen in the eyes of those who had conscientiously engaged in it, to see that sacred oath thus with contempt violated. It had been taken in the North of Ireland with great solemnity, and as long as it was stuck to by those who first engaged in it in Scotland and England their undertakings were signally blessed. When it was broken and deserted, first by the Sectarian party in England, confusion in Church and State had its rise from their proceedings. Yet in the Usurper's time those who were true covenanters were the only persons who stuck to the King's interest, as well as to sound principles in religion—and that in all the three kingdoms. However, little opposition or testimony was given against these proceedings in Parliament; the minority otherwise minded partly seeing the current of defection so strong, that they thought it was beyond their power to stop the course. The Parliaments of England and Scotland had already done the same, and it was accounted a crime to avow the Covenant."

Persecution produced in Ireland, as in Scotland, its usual effects of compromise and apostacy both as to principle and practice. The hedge of the vineyard was broken down and "the boar out of the wood" wasted it at his

pleasure. The ministry in general, though refusing conformity to Prelacy, after a feeble resistance, tamely yielded compliance with the mandates of the persecuting monarch. Imitating the example of the Indulged in Scotland, they compromised their allegiance to Christ and their solemn Covenant engagements—made high professions of loyalty and attachment to the throne—loudly and bitterly condemned those who chose a more fearless and faithful course but which they branded as turbulent and imprudent —accepted thankfully a Toleration which was extended to them in the exercise of the absolute supremacy of the crown—and received as REGIUM DONUM from the bloody and deceitful hands of CHARLES II. a miserable and degrading pittance which is thus described in the List of "Pensions and Annuities" for the year 1672 "*for secret services without account, £600.*" This most objectionable gift is still retained and vindicated, under the plausible, but untenable pretext, that it was designed as compensation for the loss of tithes in the Parish Churches which a few of the Presbyterian ministers held for a time, but which they never could legally claim. In reality, it was designed as a royal gift to reward and still further to secure their silence and their acquiescence in measures unjust, tyrannical, and persecuting.

We rejoice in being able to record, that amidst general defection and alarm, there were many of the people, and a few in the ministry, who held fast their integrity, and voluntarily chose sufferings and reproaches rather than abandon the testimony of Christ. Of the ministers, MICHAEL BRUCE, of Killinchy; JOHN CROOKSHANKS, of Raphoe; and ANDREW M'CORMAC, of Magherally, deserve honorable mention. "They called the people," says Adair "to solemn and great meetings, sometimes in the night and sometimes in the day, in solitary places, whither people in great abundance and with great alacrity and applause flocked to them. There they spoke much against the bishops and the times. This matter of preaching (as it was in itself commendable and faithful when rightly managed) did exceedingly please most people. These men were cried up as the only courageous, faithful,

and zealous ministers. Their manner, in daring the magistrate openly and calling great assemblies together in despite of authority, was, by the common sort of people, thought great stoutness and gallantry. The people not only countenanced and called them up, but liberally contributed for them. Thus they continued for a considerable time, going from one place and from one parish to another, as well as from one county to another, under disguise and oft in the night time. The rest of the ministers were counted timorous cowards, and all they did was nothing, because they went not to the hills." These men raised, at once, a public protest against Prelacy and arbitrary power, preached the Gospel openly to large assemblies, and fostered meetings for united fellowship and prayer, till compelled through the violence of the persecutors to escape for a time to Scotland. The last two were honored to achieve the martyr's crown on the field of battle. Crookshanks took part in the renovation of the Covenants, at Lanark; and a few days after, together with M'Cormac, his fellow-labourer, he fell on Pentland heights, fighting for the cause of religion and humanity.

While the ministers in Ireland as a body, and the great majority of the people, yielded compliance with the times, there were numbers who still cherished a sense of the solemn obligation of the nation's vows, and who, amidst prevailing apostacy, held fast the valuable attainments of the Second Reformation. Deprived of ministers, they sought, in meetings for private fellowship, that edification and comfort which they could not enjoy in public ordinances, administered by men who had proved unfaithful to the testimony of Christ. The Great Shepherd did not forget His little flock in the wilderness—"the flock of slaughter," when under manifold privations and trials. The Society people in the North of Ireland received occasional visits of faithful servants of Christ from Scotland. Among these was the simple-minded and prayerful ALEXANDER PEDEN, distinguished for his faith, self-sacrificing zeal, and fervent attachment to the covenanted testimony. His repeated visits to this country served to encourage and refresh the witnesses for truth; and the watchful care

of Providence over him, was observable in his lengthened preservation from the power of the persecutor.

When the violence of the enemy against the Lord's heritage increased in intensity, and the scattered witnesses for Covenanted attainments in Ireland were subjected to the greatest privations, a bold and earnest labourer was raised up in the person of DAVID HOUSTON, while still a licentiate, connected with the Presbytery of ROUTE, in the lower part of the County of Antrim. Being convinced of the apathy and opposition of the ministers to the cause for which Christ's covenanted witnesses in Scotland were suffering to the death, he boldly overstepped conventional restrictions and Presbyterial regulations. By preaching openly in the fields, and visiting the scattered Societies, he raised up a home-standard for despised and forsaken truth; and administered spiritual nourishment and comfort to all who adhered to the public cause and testimony of Christ. To large numbers he declared, with earnestness and acceptance, the continued obligation of the British Covenants, and loudly protested against courses of defection. Such faithfulness could not be endured by those who had deliberately committed themselves to ways of backsliding. They censured his proceedings with severity and bitterness in their ecclesiastical courts, as such men might be expected to do; and sought to damage his reputation with the people by branding him with "turbulence and irregularity," and by giving publicity to certain groundless rumours said to be "vented on him while he was at Glenarm," because of his fearless and faithful preaching, which they deprecated so much as dangerous and inexpedient.

As the civil authorities at the time aided the ministers in their attempts to silence the voice of faithful remonstrance, David Houston was compelled to leave the country. After an interval of some years, however, he returned to Ireland, and was ordained as the pastor of a congregation. But his faithful preaching, his boldness in testifying against declension, and his association with the people who loved the "old paths" in various districts, so displeased the Presbyterian ministers, that he

was constrained to renounce all intercourse with them, and to protest publicly against their cowardice and defections. Large numbers of the people joined him; and openly testifying against a ministry that was so manifestly unfaithful, they constituted themselves into a number of regular "Fellowship Meetings" for mutual support and edification. Thus they set themselves to wait, in prayer and patience, the Lord's time to favour Zion. Intercourse with the wanderers who fled from the rage of persecutors in Scotland, served to encourage the Societies in Ireland to hold fast their integrity, and to enter into closer followship with brethren who were enduring for the same precious truths, still greater privations and sufferings. Together, they concerted measures for maintaining and transmitting to posterity a testimony for truth. When, in 1681, the Societies in Scotland organized a GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE, constituted of representatives from the various district meetings, the sister Societies in the North of Ireland entered into regular fellowship with them, which was maintained by the interchange of letters, delegates, and acts of brotherly sympathy and kindness, till the Revolution, and for a considerable time afterwards.

Towards the end of the persecution, David Houston complied with the earnest and repeated invitations of the Societies in Scotland, to co-operate with JAMES RENWICK, in preaching in that country, and in maintaining upon the mountains and in the fields the standard of the Reformation, in the midst of unparalleled dangers and distresses. Even when absent from Ireland, he continued to superintend and foster the scattered Societies in this country. During a somewhat prolonged visit, in the year 1687, he preached in various places with renewed power, and was followed by great multitudes. The continued boldness and success of this intrepid witness for the truth could not fail to be highly displeasing to those who had so long persisted in a time-serving policy. He was accordingly informed against to the civil authorities, as factious and disloyal; and in January, 1688, he was apprehended, and conveyed to Dublin, where he lay imprisoned till midsummer. Then he was sent over to Scotland,

that he might be formally tried by the Council, and share, in all probability, the fate of Renwick, his illustrious fellow-labourer. On his way to Edinburgh, he was rescued by a few resolute men in a pass near Cumnock; and after labouring for a time in Scotland, to the mortification of disappointed persecutors, and to the annoyance of certain leaders of the society people—who were already meditating defection—he returned to Ireland. Sharing in all the dangers connected with the wars in the North, on the accession of King William, he laboured faithfully till his death, which occurred in 1696, to instruct establish, and comfort many Praying Societies scattered throughout various parts of the Province of Ulster. For a few years, he was the only minister in Britain or Ireland that fully upheld the standard of the Covenanted Reformation. Adherents to the same cause from Scotland as well as Ireland resorted to him, for the dispensation of baptism, marriage, and other ordinances. Thus, there was left in Ulster, amidst increasing darkness, a beacon-light, preserved from the Reformation, which has not ceased to shine till the present day.

PERIOD VI.

FROM THE REVOLUTION TO THE CONSTITUTION OF THE REFORMED SYNOD: 1688—1811.

SECTION I.—THE REVOLUTION SETTLEMENT.

THE Revolution which dethroned James II., and placed William Prince of Orange, upon the throne of Britain, deserves to be commemorated as a signal instance of Divine interposition to the inhabitants of these lands. Throughout the Continent of Europe, the Protestant interest was, at that time, in the utmost danger of extinction. The strength and hopes of oppressed witnesses in these countries were almost gone, and everything appeared favourable to the design of establishing Popery, when William III., at the call of the nation, ascended the throne, without any effectual resistance, and James, compelled to surrender the power he had abused, became a fugitive in a foreign land. This political change, while it exemplified and fully vindicated some of the grand principles for which Covenanted witnesses had contended unto blood, subserved purposes the most valuable to the cause of truth and freedom. The darling scheme of the Man of Sin, to gain back these countries, once more to the fold of the Papacy, was effectually baffled; the sword of persecution was sheathed; many unjust laws were repealed; and the rights of conscience were to a large extent guaranteed.

It is, however, deeply to be deplored that, at this memorable era, neither these nations, nor their new ruler, rendered to God according to His great goodness. They improved not, as they ought to have done, the opportunity so happily presented of avouching their allegiance

to the King of kings, who had wrought for them wondrous deliverance, and of restoring to a Scriptural basis the government in Church and State. Instead of calling to mind the solemn vows of the nation, and the example of the late Reformation, the old abjured system of Prelacy was retained in the national church of England and Ireland, and the nation's faith was pledged to its perpetual support. In Scotland, Presbyterianism was established, yet the church was left under Erastian control. The Revolution Settlement was, in its fundamental provisions, marked by errors and defects, the consequences of which, even to our own day, have been most detrimental. The hopes of the remnant of faithful Covenanted witnesses in Scotland and Ireland, who hailed the landing of the Prince of Orange as a special deliverance, were doomed to speedy disappointment. The ecclesiastical system that was established in Scotland, at the Revolution, was so unlike that of the Reformation period, as to be essentially a different system. The civil institutions, unlike those which had been previously set up, did not pretend to possess a Scriptural character. Even the Covenants by which the Reformation had been ratified were wholly ignored by the great mass of the community, while by many others they were positively and contemptuously repudiated; and thus it continues to be to the present day.

Section II.—Grounds of Dissent from the Revolution Settlement.

The Society People, as the remnant of Covenanters left by the persecution were then termed, protested openly against the Revolution Settlement, and remained separate from it, both in its ecclesiastical and civil departments. The following *Grounds of Dissent*, the exhibition of which displayed at once the clear discernment and thorough fidelity of our worthy ancestors in most trying circumstances, we still regard as tenable and satisfactory:—

First—The conduct of the representatives and rulers

of the nation was, in many respects, highly reprehensible. The crown was offered to the new sovereign without proper conditions, and without regard to the peculiar obligations under which the nation lay to God, from its Scriptural vows and enactments. While Prelacy was set aside in Scotland, by the Parliament, as "a great and insupportable grievance," and as contrary to "the inclinations of the Scottish people," it was not declared to be contrary to the Word of God, nor to be abjured in the Covenant. Presbyterian order was ratified and established, mainly because it was agreeable to the wishes of a majority of the people. The attainments reached between 1638 and 1649 were wilfully overlooked, and the church was established according to the less advanced Reformation of 1592; while all the Reforming Acts and securities of the period of the Second Reformation were left annulled by the infamous Act Rescissory. The church's Confession of Faith was authoritatively appointed by the civil ruler, after having been read in his presence, without any regard to the manner in which it had been adopted by the Church of Scotland in 1647, and without reference to the proofs from Scripture, the Form of Church Government, or the Directory for Worship. The oath of the Covenants was still rejected, and an unqualified oath of allegiance required, which was wholly incompatible with the nation's prior engagements to God. Instead of setting up rulers possessed of Scriptural qualifications, as was provided for in the Acts of the Reforming period, men indifferent to religion, and hostile to the church's best interests, were exalted to the highest places in the land.

Secondly—The Church of Scotland, at the Revolution, embraced such evils in its constitution and administration as justified our forefathers in refusing fellowship with it, and necessitated them to assume the position of open dissent and condemnation.

1. The first General Assembly held after the Revolution in 1690 acquiesced in the civil establishment without protesting against its inherent guilt and many defects. When Shields, Linning, and Boyd presented a paper,

asking the Assembly to inquire into and confess the public sins of the nation, they refused to consider it. The claims of the Reformation, and the obligation of the national Covenants, were in nowise acknowledged. At a subsequent period, sentence of deposition from the ministry was passed upon the Rev. John M'Millan, for no other offence than that of pleading for the obligation of the Covenants. There was no formal condemnation of the royal supremacy by the judicatories of the church, nor was the Headship of Christ or the independence of the church asserted; while the Erastian power of the monarch, in repeatedly proroguing and dissolving her assemblies, was permitted to pass without protestation. We cannot but condemn the conduct of the Church of Scotland in concurring in a settlement which was thus opposed to Scriptural requirements, subversive of former attainments, and injurious to the freedom and welfare of the Church.

2. In the judicatories of the Revolution church were men whom faithful witnesses could not acknowledge as Scriptural office-bearers. Some had approved of the Public Resolutions; others had taken immoral oaths imposed by the former government; and many had accepted the Indulgence and Toleration. A large number of curates was admitted, on the royal mandate, as ministers in full standing, on their subscribing the Westminster Confession, without declaring their renunciation of Prelacy, or their sorrow for the part they had taken in the persecution. Many of the elders who had been implicated in the persecution were received without the least sign of repentance. Overtures, indeed, were made in various Synods for renewing the Covenants, removing corruptions, and reviving religion; but these were resisted or evaded; and instead of returning to former attainments, and making progress in reformation, the courts and the ministry continued to retrograde.

3. The Revolution church degraded itself by the tamest submission to the Erastian supremacy of the State. This was shown in prescribing her Confession, and the terms on which curates should be admitted to the ministry, and in convening and dissolving meetings of the supreme

court of the church in the name and at the pleasure of the sovereign. In no single instance since the Revolution has the Church of Scotland ventured to convene an Assembly, in virtue of her own intrinsic power, nor has the Assembly ventured to sit longer than the ten days prescribed by law. Though lay-patronage was set aside for a time, the election of ministers was not yielded to the whole body of communicants, but was given to an aggregate meeting of heritors and elders, some of whom might not be resident in the parish, or even in communion with the church. In 1711, the law of Patronage, in its most unqualified form, was re-enacted. For some years the church courts uttered a timid protest against this invasion of the people's rights, but afterwards, as the *moderate* party gained the ascendancy, even this was withheld, and the law was enforced with rigour.

4. The corruptions in doctrine and discipline of the Revolution church fully justified dissent and separation. The Episcopal curates, who brought in Arminian and other errórs, soon infected the whole church. The dangerous teachings of some who were entrusted with the training of the rising ministry were screened. The cases of Professors Simpson and Campbell, and of Dr. M'Gill, who had taught Arminian, Pelagian, and Socinian errors, exhibit a criminal disregard to Divine truth, and an utter neglect of faithful discipline. The proceedings of the General Assembly in the "Marrow Controversy," exhibited gross partiality and defection. Avowed errorists and scandalously immoral persons were either slightly censured, or escaped with impunity, while the heaviest censures were inflicted on those who earnestly contended for precious parts of the faith once delivered to the saints. Shields, Linning, and Boyd, who pleaded for Reformation attainments, were not admitted without admonition; and Mr. John Hepburn, who earnestly contended against defection, and sought to have the Covenants revived, was actually deposed. The tyranny and oppression of the church were displayed also in the forced settlements of ministers under the law of patronage. Ebenezer Erskine, and three other ministers, were de-

posed from the sacred office for reclaiming against the intrusion of ministers, and the despoiling the people of their Scriptural rights. This led, in 1732, to the constitution of the Secession church. A similar act of tyrannical administration, inflicting on Mr. Thomas Gillespie the sentence of deposition, led, in 1761, to the formation of another distinct fellowship, under the designation of the Presbytery of Relief.

Finally, in 1707, the Church and State became involved in additional guilt by the Incorporating Union between England and Scotland. Whatever outward advantages may have resulted to the Scottish nation from the union, the pledge given for the perpetual maintenance of Prelacy in England, as a fundamental and essential article, was a palpable violation of the Solemn League and Covenant; while the effects flowing from the union have operated powerfully to prevent any return to former Covenant engagements. The imposition of sinful oaths, administered in an unscriptural manner, as necessary qualifications for holding public offices, greatly increased the guilt of the nation. The oaths of allegiance, supremacy, and abjuration required to be taken by legislators, and by persons connected with Government offices, are diametrically opposed to the vow of the British Covenants, and involve not only the jurors, but likewise those who choose representatives, and the whole nation, in aggravated guilt and perfidy. These measures are not to be viewed as the sin of rulers alone; they are justly chargeable against the church, as it uttered no remonstrance against their enactment, but, on the contrary, became a consenting party, and has all along manifested the disposition to avail itself of any political advantages which might accrue from their adoption.

On these weighty grounds, faithful witnesses who adhered to the perpetual obligation of the national Covenants, and were fully persuaded of the Scriptural character of the Reformation, felt that there was no alternative left them but to abstain from fellowship with the Revolution church, and to stand separate from the Constitution. However disappointing to the hopes which

they had fondly cherished, and painful to be denuded of their valued rights as citizens—to dwell like aliens in the land of their birth and affections—they considered themselves called, by the sacred vows which they had tendered to the King of Zion, to stand aloof from those who had surrendered His testimony, and to refuse incorporation with such as practically rejected the supreme authority of His Word. They regarded it as at once their duty and privilege to "go forth without the camp to Jesus, bearing His reproach," like the "two witnesses" that testify in sackcloth, while Antichristianism prevails in civil and ecclesiastical systems. These grounds of separation from the Revolution settlement in Church and State, instead of being diminished, have been increased by the course of national legislation and administration. Approving and adopting them, we regard it as the only consistent and safe position for Christ's witnesses to stand separate from all connection with unscriptural systems, and in the way of open protest and practical dissent, to transmit their testimony to posterity.

Section III.—Progress of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Scotland.

In these circumstances, the faithful adherents to the Covenanted Reformation felt that they were bound to abstain from all acts which would imply approval of public national sins, or participation in their guilt. Though in danger of being ensnared by the proposal, on the part of a few of their number, to renew the Covenants in such a way as to embrace the cause of the Prince of Orange—a design which the sagacity and faithfulness of Mr. Robert Hamilton served to expose and defeat; and though afterwards tried by the defection of the Rev. T. Linning, with Messrs. Shields and Boyd, Licentiates, they refused incorporation with the State. For a period of several years after the death of David Houston, they cultivated Christian communion, and fervent attachment to the truth, by means of Fellowship Meetings, Correspondences, and General Meetings. Believing it to be inconsistent to join in occasional

fellowship with a church which was unfaithful to Christ, they rallied round the standard for truth which others had abandoned—plainly perceiving that attendance upon public ordinances, dispensed by those who were erroneous and unfaithful, gave countenance to courses of defection, and would lead to the breaking up of their organization, and the utter suppression of the martyrs' testimony.

Scrupulously contending for the whole truth once delivered to the saints, and manifesting a jealous regard for the divinely prescribed order of the sanctuary, they waited patiently and prayerfully on the providence of the Redeemer till He would send them a stated ministry. This blessing they at length obtained, in a manner as unexpected as it was satisfactory and encouraging. The Rev. John M'Millan, a minister in connection with the Established Church of Scotland, of the parish of Balmaghie, in Galloway, had, in the year 1703, sought from the Presbytery of Kirkcudbright a recognition of the obligation of the Covenants, and the adoption of a testimony in behalf of Reformation attainments. After various pleadings before the ecclesiastical courts, he was visited with the heavy sentence of deposition from the ministry, for no other charge alleged or preferred than that of declaring publicly his fervent attachment to the Scriptural vows of the church and nation. To evidence that he was actuated by no factious or obstinate spirit, he abstained for a time from the exercise of his ministry. But when he became convinced that his protest and appeal to the higher judicatories would bring him no redress, he felt that it would be wrong any longer to acquiesce in an unrighteous sentence, depriving him of the ministry which he had received of the Lord Jesus. He therefore resumed his ministry, and was cordially welcomed by the flock over whom he had been placed, who concurred with him in his testimony for these important truths. The United Societies, that had watched with the deepest interest Mr. M'Millan's trials and contendings, having satisfied themselves that his views of the Covenanted Reformation, both in Church and State, were thorough and sound, addressed to him an earnest and harmonious call to be-

come their pastor. His acceptance of this invitation in 1706, after frequent conferences and deliberations, restored to the witnessing remnant the invaluable privilege of a ministry of their own choice, and of the ordinances of religion dispensed to them in faithfulness and purity. Amidst manifold toils and privations, and exposed to much calumny and reproach, Mr. M'Millan visited and preached for many years among a widely scattered flock, and his labours were blessed for confirming and establishing many in the testimony of Christ.

In a short time, Mr. M'Millan was joined by Mr. John M'Neill, a licentiate of the Established Church, who had steadfastly contended for the same truths, and had endured not a little opposition and suffering for his fidelity. In 1708, they presented to the Commission of the General Assembly a protestation and declinature, in which were exhibited, clearly and fully, their reasons of dissent from the Revolution church.

When the Incorporating Union of Scotland with England in 1707, and the restoration of Patronage in 1711, gave strong additional evidence of the apostacy of the nation and of the church, Mr. M'Millan and his fellow-labourer, with the cordial concurrence of the Societies, adopted the resolution of renewing the Covenants—"both as a means of confirming the faith of the Church and of giving a public testimony for the cause of Scotland's reformation." After much careful preparation, this important duty was observed in a very solemn manner at Auchinsaugh, near Douglas, Lanarkshire, in the year 1712. The Covenants, National and Solemn League, were sworn and subscribed, with marginal alterations adapting them to their peculiar circumstances and those of the church and nation at the time, accompanied with an acknowledgment of sins and engagement to duties. This step was eminently seasonable, and displayed a faithful and courageous spirit. Though not prepared nor required to approve of every sentiment or form of expression contained in the papers accompanying this transaction, we willingly testify that this renovation is deserving of high honor and grateful remembrance—as it presented

a noble example of separate ecclesiastical Covenanting by a minority in the land, and laid upon their posterity a superadded obligation to walk in the way of Covenant obedience and fidelity.

The standard for truth which was thus fearlessly lifted up, and the consistent efforts of a church thus pledging itself anew to the National Covenants, had the effect of awakening attention to the value of Scriptural reformation, and of provoking others, especially as the corruptions and oppressions of the Establishment increased, to testify boldly in favour of some of its great principles. About twenty years after the renovation of the Covenants at Auchinsaugh, Mr. EBENEZER ERSKINE and three other ministers seceded from the Established Church, chiefly on account of the evils flowing from patronage, the forced settlement of ministers, and other tyrannical measures. Being joined by others, they constituted the ASSOCIATE PRESBYTERY and afterwards the SYNOD. Though speedily divided by the controversy respecting the "BURGESS OATH," into two separate Synods, that passed the highest censures upon each other, they both continued to grow rapidly.

When the Secession took place, it was hoped that its members would unite with Mr. M'Millan and the societies in lifting up a full testimony for the Covenanted Reformation. This expectation was disappointed. The first Seceders, while admitting that grievous defects existed in the Revolution Settlement, and that the rulers set up did not possess Scriptural qualifications, yet continued to acknowledge the Civil Government as the ordinance of God, and to render it their full sanction and support. In the Testimony emitted by the four brethren who constituted the first Associate Presbytery, it is expressly declared that they could not swear allegiance to the British Government because of inherent evils in its constitution, and because such an oath would "contravene the oath of the Covenants," which they held to be binding on themselves and others, and to be morally unalterable. But when their numbers had largely increased, they speedily receded from this declaration; and, with lament-

able inconsistency, professed to maintain the descending obligation of vows which repudiate and abjure Prelacy and Erastianism, and, at the same time, engaged voluntarily by oath to support a constitution which is essentially unscriptural, Prelatic, and Erastian. It was evident that with those who followed such a course, Covenanters —who maintained the supremacy of the Word of God in things civil as well as ecclesiastical, and who believed that the conduct of these nations at the Revolution involved a breach of national engagements—could not unite. In the controversy which arose between the fathers of the Secession and Mr. M'Millan and his friends, the sentiments of the former were fully developed; and it was painful to find, that while they advocated ably the doctrines of grace, the obligation of the Covenants, and many ecclesiastical reforms, the civil part of the Reformation, though admitted to be embraced in the nation's vows, was not appreciated or maintained by them. The Mediatorial Headship of the Redeemer was limited to the Church, and it was argued that He does not, as Mediator, govern the nations—and hence that nations as such are not bound to acknowledge Christ or His religion; that magistrates are to be recognized as God's ordinance, whatever be their moral character or the nature of their government; and that scriptural qualifications, however desirable, are not indispensable to the thorough approval of magistrates in reformed nations. It is not to be wondered at that those who held such views—practically rejecting the nation's vows, and putting the gravestone upon Covenanted attainments—should, in process of time, depart still farther from the principles of the Reformation, and that their testimony should have proved so fluctuating and unstable. The great and numerous changes that have taken place in the history of the Secession, show how impracticable it is to maintain a Scriptural testimony in fellowship with a corrupt Antichristian civil system.

The Rev. THOMAS NAIRN having left the Associate Presbytery because of their sentiments on civil government, and joined with Mr. M'Millan, a Presbytery was constituted at BRAEHEAD, in the parish of Carnwath, on

1st August, 1743, under the designation of the REFORMED PRESBYTERY. This title, which has suggested the name by which Covenanters are known in these and other countries, was assumed to indicate attachment to the cause of the Reformation, and the fixed resolve to contend earnestly for all the attainments in Church and State to which the nation is righteously pledged. Accessions to the ministry and membership of the Church now speedily followed. As an expression of gratitude to the Church's Head, and as a means of exciting to increased love and labour in His cause, the work of Covenant-renovation was again publicly performed at CRAWFORD-JOHN, in Lanarkshire, in the year 1745. The record of this transaction not having been preserved as in the former instance at Auchinsaugh, the latter has come to be more frequently referred to and familiarly known in the Church. As these acts of Covenant renovation—adapting national vows to the situation of the Church, as a dissenting minority—were the only instances in which the British Covenants in all their integrity were renewed until a recent period, we subjoin the following statements recording the Church's approval of them.

1. Covenanting is an occasional duty to be performed as the circumstances of the church or the nation may seem to demand; and the permanent obligation of the Covenants of these lands depends on their moral and Scriptural character, and their being strictly national deeds, rather than on their being publicly recognized or renewed. 2. When a Church or people have been brought under the bond of such engagements, it is a duty warranted alike by reason and Scripture, occasionally to renew them, as the aspects of Divine Providence may require. 3. The defection of a majority of the Church or nation from Scriptural Covenants does not cancel their obligation; on the contrary, the call upon a minority adhering to them, to bring them up to remembrance becomes the more urgent, when the public acts of the majority have a tendency to bury them in oblivion. 4. We approve of the zeal and faithfulness which prompted our fathers to engage in this work at suitable times, and wil-

lingly admit that we are placed under superadded obligations to adhere to these Covenants, in consequence of their deeds of renovation.

Two ministers of the Reformed Presbytery having embraced the loose views so prevalent at that period on the nature and extent of the atonement, an unhappy controversy and schism took place in 1753. The emission of a public Testimony, which was early contemplated, was, in consequence of this, for some time delayed. In the year 1761, THE ACT, DECLARATION AND TESTIMONY was adopted by the Presbytery at PLOUGHLANDHEAD, and soon after published. Thenceforward, acquaintance with the contents of this elaborate compilation was expected from all entrants to the fellowship of the Church, and an acknowledgment of it was made a term of Ministerial and Christian communion.

SECTION IV.— PROGRESS OF THE REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND.

The state of the Covenanted cause in Ireland, during this period, demands from us special notice. After the death of DAVID HOUSTON, in 1696, the friends of Reformation principles, deprived of a regular pastorate, for a number of years maintained their distinct organization, and enjoyed spiritual edification and communion by means of FELLOWSHIP MEETINGS. These were organized into *District* or *Corresponding* meetings, and united into a *General* or *National Meeting*, like those of their brethren in Scotland, during the ministry, and after the death of the martyr Renwick. This was evidently a better way not only of testifying in behalf of truth, but of enjoying Christian fellowship, than by waiting on the ministrations of those who had abandoned the testimony of Christ, and were supporting error and corruption in the church. Frequent correspondence between Covenanters in Ireland and Scotland was maintained by means of their associated meetings. By occasional interchange of letters and deputations, they took mutual counsel concerning common measures for the propaga-

tion of the truth, and cultivated fraternal sympathy in their common trials, temptations, and sufferings. In the dispensation of sacraments in Scotland, and in the renovation of the Covenants at Auchinsaugh and Crawfordjohn, the Societies in Ireland were represented.

The greatest trial which the Societies in this country had at that time to endure was their lengthened deprivation of public ordinances. With the exception of a brief visit of some weeks of the Rev. John M'Millan, in the year 1707, they did not, for more than forty years, enjoy, what they so eagerly desired, access at home to the faithful preaching of the Word. It is truly wonderful that, in such circumstances, the Covenanted remnant in Ireland were able to maintain their organization and to hold fast their profession. Numbers of them, at all seasons of the year, resorted to Scotland for baptism and marriage, and to enjoy communion with their brethren in other ordinances. At a period when the knowledge of evangelical truth, and the practice of godliness, were low throughout the land, these scattered witnesses stood aloof from the general corruption, and faithfully upheld the testimony of Christ. We can ascribe their continued existence, and the power they exerted for good, to nought else than the special care and blessing of the King of Zion, in connection with faithfulness to scriptural engagements and earnest pleadings for the advancement of His glory.

The constitution of the Reformed Presbytery in Scotland was followed by important advantages to the Covenanted cause in Ireland. A considerable number of societies in various parts of Ulster immediately placed themselves under its jurisdiction. Thenceforth they received the dispensation of public ordinances by means of a minister and probationer sent by the Presbytery, for several months in the year. When the renovation of the Covenants took place at Crawfordjohn, it was at first proposed to extend the work to Ireland, and the ministers who came over were instructed to take pains to prepare the people for this solemn service. From various causes, however, this work was not proceeded with.

The regular organization of congregations, and the or-

dination of pastors over them, soon followed the more frequent dispensation of public ordinances. Mr. WILLIAM MARTIN, a native of County Derry, was the first Reformed Presbyterian minister ordained in Ireland. This took place at Vow, on the Lower Bann, in July, 1757. In 1760 the Societies were divided into two congregations, separated by this river; and Mr. Martin, choosing Antrim and Down, resided at Kellswater. In 1763, a third was formed of the Societies along the Bann-side and those around Newtownlimavady, over which Mr. MATTHEW LINN was ordained. Soon after, Mr. WILLIAM JAMES was ordained near Bready, over a congregation formed of the Societies scattered through the adjacent parts of Derry, Tyrone, and Donegal. The Testimony published in 1761 was adopted by the church in Ireland, and served to build up its members in the knowledge of the truth, and to train the young and other inquirers to "go forth by the footsteps of the flock."

In August, 1763, a Presbytery was constituted in Ireland. Under the Divine blessing on the abundant and faithful labours of its members, the cause which they held so dear made considerable progress for a period of about sixteen years. But upon the death of Mr. James in 1779—the number of ministers having been reduced by the emigration of several to America—it was judged advisable once more to place the congregations under the supervision of the Scottish Presbytery—a standing committee in Ireland having charge of all matters of local importance and jurisdiction. This arrangement continued till the year 1792, when the Presbytery of Ireland was re-formed, as at the first, "on the footing of the Covenanted Church of Scotland, to continue in friendly correspondence in all matters of general concern," with the Presbytery in Scotland.

One distinguished servant of Christ—the Rev. WM. STAVELY—served, during this period, greatly to uphold and extend the Covenanted Testimony. From his ordination at Conlig, near Newtownards, in 1772, he continued for more than half-a-century, amidst privations and difficulties of no ordinary kind, to preach at all seasons, and often in

the open air, to very large assemblies. Endued with remarkable strength of constitution, and with great energy of mind, he proclaimed with fulness and power the doctrines of the glorious Gospel, at a time when the cause of evangelical truth was at a very low ebb. The standard of the Covenanted Testimony he faithfully displayed, and with boldness exposed the various forms of error that were most prevalent. These labours were eminently of a missionary character. Numbers made their accession to the standard of Christ's crown and covenant. The dews of the Spirit's influence copiously descended, especially during the administration of sealing ordinances. Before the death of this venerable servant of God, which occurred in 1825, he beheld regularly-organized congregations in districts, where, on his designation to the ministry, there were only Societies; and pastors ministering to numerous flocks, where he had been for a time a solitary labourer.

Towards the close of the Eighteenth century, the North of Ireland was the scene of deep and prolonged excitement, which at length, in the year 1798, broke out into open insurrection. The country having been left undefended by reason of the Transatlantic war in which Britain was engaged, and the French threatening an invasion of Ulster, the people, with marvellous unanimity and enthusiasm, combined in Volunteer companies for the protection of their own shores. Covenanting ministers and people were not backward in favouring this spontaneous and patriotic movement, and in arming for the common defence. But long after the danger had passed which occasioned this popular uprising, the armed organization of the people continued, and from time to time they assembled in immense meetings for the discussion and furtherance of political reforms. The blasphemous writings of Thomas Paine, and the atheistical and revolutionary principles of the French republicans, were extensively leavening the minds of men at that time. Moreover, it was a period of abounding wickedness, when drunkenness and violence, profane swearing and Sabbath-breaking, with the unblushing neglect of all the ordi-

nances and precepts of religion, prevailed to a most lamentable extent. Infatuated with the impression of their own power, and dazzled by prospects of political emancipation, the Protestants of Ulster rushed into an ill-omened conspiracy with Papists, whose object was separation from Britain and the establishment of an Irish Republic. In these circumstances, Reformed Presbyterians were placed in a most difficult and trying situation. As fearless and uncompromising advocates of freedom, and of the people's rights, it was supposed that whatever influence they possessed would be exerted upon the side of the insurgents, and no little solicitation and even violence was employed to constrain them to do so. On the other hand, their preaching to large assemblies in the fields, their influence with the people, and their well-known sympathies with the cause of the oppressed drew upon them the unnecessary suspicions and vigilance of the Government. Secret agents were unscrupulously employed to entrap them within the meshes of the law. Thus they were exposed oftentimes to most unjustifiable annoyances. No Covenanter, however strong his sympathies with the people, could consistently enter into the schemes of the United Irishmen, or take the oath of their secret and most dangerous association. Neither liberty nor prosperity could be expected from the success of a conspiracy in which Popery and Infidelity were the two prevailing ingredients. In October, 1796, when the excitement had risen to an alarming height, "A Seasonable and Necessary Information" was published in the name of the Reformed Presbyterian Dissenters in the counties of Antrim and Down, expressing their conscientious abhorrence and detestation of all tumultuous and disorderly meetings, and utterly disclaiming connection with such, whether held in public or private, as are prejudicial to the peace, safety, and prosperity of the community. Nevertheless, it must be admitted that a few in connection with the church were so led away by the spirit of the age, and by the threats of the conspirators, as to join in the Union. There were others both in the ministry and membership who, while condemning this unscriptural

and unholy confederation, and refusing to be bound up with it by any oath, yet became openly identified with the accompanying agitation, and partially co-operated with these deluded men for the specified and limited object of obtaining a redress of grievances. The sin and folly, even of such association soon became apparent to all, and were afterwards acknowledged, before the courts of the church. The Reformed Presbyterian Church has uniformly condemned confederation with the known enemies of God and of His truth, and has discountenanced the use of violent and unconstitutional measures for the attainment of political ends. It was a cause of sincere lamentation at the time, that any connected with her fellowship, should have been drawn into the least degree of union or co-operation with the movement which resulted in the rebellion of '98; and the decision of the church was, that in no case should persons so guilty be restored to the privileges of membership, without adequate censure.

The cause of the Covenanted Reformation had obtained a footing in the States of America at an early period. A number of faithful Covenanters had been banished to the Colonies, and others had sought an asylum there from the persecutions in Scotland and Ireland. These exiles and their descendants united in praying Societies, wherever it was practicable, on the footing of Reformation principles. An attempt was made to have the British Covenants renewed in the State of Pennsylvania, so early as 1743, by a minister who afterwards proved unsteadfast in his profession. In the year 1752, the Scottish Presbytery sent out one of their number, the Rev. John Cuthbertson, at the request of the scattered societies in America—which for a lengthened period on that continent, without a pastor and without public ordinances, alone displayed a banner for the whole of the Covenanted Reformation. Their subsequent progress has been largely owing to accessions both to the ministry and membership of the church, obtained by emigration from the North of Ireland. By the arrival of two Irish ministers—Messrs. Linn and Dobbin, sent to co-operate with Mr. Cuthbertson,

a Presbytery was constituted in 1774. When this Presbytery joined with the Associate Presbyteries in originating the Associate Reformed Church, another distinguished minister from Ireland, the Rev. JAMES M'KINNEY—being obliged to leave his country in 1793, on account of the political troubles of the time—became there, as he had been at home, a heroic and eloquent defender of the truth. His exertions were eminently blessed by God, for the revival and enlargement of the Covenanted Church in America. Other ministers and preachers that emigrated from Ireland towards the close of the last century, and more recently, have helped greatly this advancement. We regard it as a matter of devout gratitude and thanksgiving to the God of our fathers that continual accessions from the church in Ireland have helped to sustain in America one of the most numerous and influential sections of the Reformed Presbyterian Church. While enduring incessant privations and contending against difficulties and discouragements, we have been made to act the part of a missionary institute on an extensive scale. Maintaining no inconsiderable growth and influence at home, we have, at the same time, been widely planting in the vast States of the North American Union the living germs of national greatness.

Notwithstanding the removal of so many of her ministers and people, the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Ulster has never ceased lengthening her own cords and strengthening her stakes. The low state of the Synod of Ulster, and the glaring inconsistencies with their own public protestations and resolutions of the ministers of the Secession Synod, especially on the question of *Regium Donum*, tended to create a feeling of sympathy and respect for the sound principles, and the independent career of the Covenanting Church. Besides, the able and indefatigable labours of such men as Alexander and M'Kinney, Gamble, and Gibson, Orr and M'Fadden, in a time of great laxity of morals and spiritual deadness, could not fail, with the blessing of the Spirit, which was often largely bestowed, to awaken a deep concern about Divine things, and to conduce to the dissemination of Calvinistic sentiments,

and the revival of true godliness. The Lord's Supper was dispensed in each congregation once every summer—many having to travel great distances to be present, and to remain in the neighbourhood during all the days of the solemnity. These were occasions of remarkable enjoyment and refreshing to the people of God. Three ministers were required to conduct the varied and prolonged exercises which were considered necessary in the circumstances; and the services of the Communion Sabbath, which were always held in the open air, were often attended by thousands of eager listeners, on whom the Word not unfrequently produced a manifest and abiding impression. In this way the church, although strict in the examination of applicants and vigilant in the exercise of a Scriptural discipline, increased in the land. As her limits extended, the travels and labours of her ministers became the more exhausting and arduous, especially as they had to assemble, in some central place, at least twice in the year in Presbytery, which was generally held near the borders of the Counties of Derry and Antrim. At a meeting at Maghera, on the 7th November, 1810, the Presbytery, now composed of twelve ministerial members, agreed to resolve itself into four Presbyteries, to be distinguished by the names—Eastern, Western, Northern, Southern, and to meet annually in Synod. Accordingly, on the 1st of May, 1811, the Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Ireland was formally constituted at CULLYBACKEY, County Antrim, by the senior member, the Rev. William Stavely, after an able discourse from the words—"But Christ as a Son over His own house, whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end." (Heb. iii. 6.) We record with gratitude, that about the same time, Synods were constituted in Scotland and America, confessing the same grand principles, and adhering to the same testimony.

PERIOD VII.

FROM THE CONSTITUTION OF SYNOD TILL THE PRESENT TIME.

SECTION I.—PROGRESS AND SEPARATION.

THE congregations under the care of Synod numbered eighteen, with several stations, to which occasional supplies of public ordinances were granted. The gratifying increase that had taken place from the latter part of the last century till the constitution of the Synod still continued. When we consider the ignorance and ungodliness that prevailed throughout the community, and the unpopularity of the principles of faithful witnesses, this can only be accounted for by the blessing of the Most High resting abundantly upon the faithful and laborious preaching of the Gospel by her ministers, and their regard to purity and fidelity in the administration of ordinances. Notwithstanding the large emigration of ministers, licentiates, and members to America and the British Colonies, and at the same time the revival of evangelical truth in the larger sections of the Protestant Church in this country, the cause of the Covenanted Testimony has been of late more widely diffused, and its principles have consequently commanded attention to a much greater extent than in former periods.

In 1828, a "Home and Foreign Missionary Association" was organized under the direction of Synod. The result of its operations has been, that the liberality of the church has been largely drawn forth; a number of missionary stations have been fostered into congregations; and weak congregations have been regularly assisted in maintaining and diffusing the truth. Ordinances have been dispensed, and congregations organized in England

In the British Colonies of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia five congregations have been established, under the pastoral care of ministers sent out and partially supported as missionaries by this church. These are now constituted into a Presbytery connected with the Irish Synod. A missionary has been sent to Australia, and a self-sustaining congregation formed in Geelong. The prospect is thus opened up of a wide extension of the principles of our testimony in the Colonies of the British empire, so soon as the church in this country shall be in circumstances to send forth a sufficient staff of labourers, to fields that are white already to the harvest.

A faithful church, bent on maintaining purity of doctrine and fellowship, has seldom existed, for any lengthened period, without being exposed to the fire of external troubles or of internal discord. Strifes and divisions, though originating in sin and fomented by the grand adversary to the injury of the cause of God, are yet oftentimes overruled by the church's exalted Head for the purification of His people, and for testing and exhibiting their stability in the truth.

In the year 1831, soon after steps had been taken to renew the Covenants of our fathers, a controversy arose in reference to the extent of the power of the Civil Magistrate *circa sacra*. This controversy greatly agitated the church until the year 1840, when it resulted in a lamentable schism, in which five ministers—all of them belonging to the Eastern Presbytery—with their adherents, declined the authority of the Synod, and set up a separate jurisdiction. This Presbytery, with some additions, soon after constituted a Synod, having adopted the Scottish Terms of Communion, and also the Testimony—subject to certain explanations. As it was greatly desired that this breach should, if possible, be healed on the ground of truth and righteousness, an immediate effort was made to bring back the brethren who had withdrawn. It soon became evident, however, that they had embraced sentiments inconsistent with the doctrines contained in the Westminster Confession. The explanations which they offered were not satisfactory, because they involved

a denial of truths plainly taught in our Standards, and charged, by implication, the confessors and martyrs of the Covenanted Reformation, and faithful witnesses since, with intolerant and persecuting sentiments.

The doctrine, that the Christian civil ruler is bound to make the Divine glory, and the public good, objects of his administration—that his authority extends to both tables of the Divine law—and that he should, in a Scriptural way, for the benefit of society, restrain and punish gross overt violations of the first, as well as of the second table, is taught in the Scriptures, held forth in the doctrinal symbols of the Reformed Churches, and clearly laid down in the Westminster Standards. Moreover, it is plainly implied in the vows of the nation, which the church declares to be of perpetual obligation. The rejection of this doctrine involves a denial of such national covenanting as engages to the maintenance of all revealed truth, the abjuration of error and false worship, and special favour to the Church of Christ. Notwithstanding this separation, there has followed a season of much peace and prosperity to the Church. Harmony and confidence were speedily restored. Those who adhered to the vows and principles of the Reformation were more firmly united in brotherly fellowship, and in the faithful maintenance of their testimony. Important measures long retarded by the spirit of controversy and alienation, were now resumed and successfully carried forward.

Some years previously to this event, a very similar controversy had divided the Covenanting Church in America. Determined on entering into active fellowship with a government, against the evils of which they had so loudly protested, and refusing to submit to the adjudication of the Synod, a number of ministers and congregations withdrew, in 1833, and constituted themselves into a separate Synod. This conduct had no inconsiderable influence in encouraging that course of opposition to former principles which resulted in the division of the church in Ireland. Immediately after this division, the Irish Synod resumed correspondence with the Synod in

America which still held fast the testimony of the church, by refusing to coalesce with a godless and immoral system of civil government. This fraternal intercourse still continues, much to the encouragement and satisfaction of both churches. Within the last few years the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Scotland has likewise been divided. The majority, obviously bent on departure from their former testimony anent fellowship with an anti-christian civil government, and eager for union with larger bodies who have never sympathized with that testimony, deliberately laid upon the minority, who were resolved to maintain the testimony of their fathers at all hazards, the necessity of coming out and being separate. It is matter for devout thankfulness that, notwithstanding these sad defections and separations, the Glorious Head of the Church has never left Himself without witnesses to bear testimony for the Covenanted work of Reformation in its integrity, and on behalf of those principles which we confidently believe are yet destined to have a world-wide application and triumph when the kingdoms of this world shall have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ.

Section II.—Covenant-Renovation.

The duty of publicly renewing the honored Covenants of these lands had often engaged the attention of Synod. After much consideration, the ministry, eldership, and members of the church became generally convinced of the seasonableness of the work, and attained to a remarkable degree of unanimity in relation both to the matter and mode of Covenant-renovation. The increase of error and laxity in the churches—the divisions that had taken place—the need of a spiritual revival and of extended efforts for the spread of the truth—the importance of exhibiting to the churches a Scriptural basis of union and co-operation—and the prospect of conflicts and trials in the future, appeared to constitute an urgent call to engage in the duty. A Bond of renovation was carefully prepared, embracing substantially all the matter of the Covenants, National and Solemn League, adapted to

the present state and circumstances of the church. A Confession of Sins, acknowledging breaches of Covenant and other transgressions—personal, national, and ecclesiastical, was also prepared. After frequent revision, and the submission of these documents to the consideration of the inferior courts, they were unanimously adopted. The work of Covenant-Renovation, it was arranged, should be first engaged in by the ministry and eldership in a Synodical capacity, and afterwards the congregations should be called to its observance.

In accordance with this arrangement, a special meeting of Synod was held at DERVOCK, in County Antrim, on the 11th and 12th of October, 1853. The former of these days, being observed as a season of fasting and humiliation, was entirely occupied with exercises appropriate to the occasion; on the second, the members engaged in the solemn work of Covenant-renovation. After the preaching of the Word, the Covenants, National and Solemn League, were read. Then the BOND founded on them was solemnly sworn with uplifted hands by ministers and elders, who were members of Synod, and by other elders and a few licentiates, who, being duly certified, were admitted to take part in the service. With feelings of unusual solemnity, the Covenant was then subscribed by all who joined in the act of renovation. The necesary steps were at once taken to engage the people in a similar service. After frequent instructions from the pulpit, and much prayerful deliberation, the different congregations, with very few exceptions, heartily entered into the work. In a short time the Bond of the Covenant was sworn and subscribed very generally throughout the church. The congregations—whether those that had pastors or such as were destitute of a stated ministry—that engaged in the solemn service, felt it to be both a duty and an honor, and experienced therein much spiritual refreshment.

The ordinance of public social covenanting, which has been so much neglected, was felt by all to be a special and high privilege. It was a season of deep seriousness and spiritual reviving from the presence of the Lord. Most salutary effects have resulted from it to the whole

church. A spirit of brotherhood, mutual confidence, fidelity, and zeal for the cause of Christ, with enlarged liberality, have since characterized the ministry and eldership; and the same gracious characteristics have, in a considerable measure, distinguished the members of the church. The blessings connected with federal dedication have already descended on our beloved Zion; and we are warranted to hope that they will be enjoyed in a still larger measure, when the obligation of these vows shall be more deeply felt, and the Covenant God of our fathers shall be had in more constant and heartfelt remembrance.

Several highly important measures for strengthening the stakes and lengthening the cords of Zion have followed the work of Covenant-renovation. In particular a THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY for the training of candidates for the ministry was established in 1854, which has since been of signal service to the church. A MISSION TO ROMANISTS in the South and West of Ireland was set on foot, and in 1855 a missionary was ordained. In the same year Synod unanimously adopted two important Overtures which have since proved of considerable advantage. The one related to the appointment of a Commission of Synod having charge of the working of Synod's schemes, with a secretary in connection with each; the other was designed to fix, from time to time, a proper standard of Ministerial Support, and to originate such measures as are necessary to promote right and progressive action in this important matter. Measures have been adopted for the increased support of the ministry, not altogether without success, and which promise to be more extensively useful. The liberality of the church has been drawn forth in an increased degree, for the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom at home and abroad. More recently, the attention of Synod and of the church has been directed to the promises concerning the conversion of Israel, and of the world. A MISSION TO THE HEATHEN or to the JEWS has been projected, and an attempt made to engage the prayers and contributions of the Church in behalf of an object which we hope soon to see realized. We regard these movements as evidences of Divine favour

and blessing in connection with Covenant-renovation, and as an earnest of still more plentiful blessings to be enjoyed in the way of faithful covenant obedience. Though it is yet with us a "day of small things," we unfeignedly rejoice that the God of our fathers has put it into His people's hearts to make a commencement in labours which are so necessarily connected with the promotion of His cause in the earth. The Lord "hath remembered His covenant for ever;" "He hath given meat unto them that fear Him; He will ever be mindful of His covenant; He hath showed His people the power of His works, that He may give them the heritage of the heathen."

Section III.—Testimony against National Evils.

The evils incorporated in the Governmental system of Britain and Ireland are such as still to necessitate from us dissent and separation. The protest of Covenanters against the Revolution Settlement, remains in full force. The Episcopal hierarchy forms an essential part of the Constitution. It exhibits a most heterogeneous blending of things civil and ecclesiastical. The Government is much less Protestant and Christian now than it was at the period of the Revolution, since Papists and Jews are admissible to all but the highest offices, judicial and executive. Whatever reforms have been made in the national representation and policy, it is undeniable that there is now a much greater encouragement given to Popery than there was at the Revolution; and that the whole national polity is conducted in a way that manifests a wider departure from the principles of the Covenanted Reformation. The exalted Mediator is not acknowledged as Prince of the kings of the earth; nor is the Supreme authority of His Word recognized in civil affairs. The Headship of Christ over His church is set aside; and the Supreme ruler for the time is declared to be head over all things, ecclesiastical as well as civil. Systems of religion which are erroneous and idolatrous are supported and fostered by the State. The home and foreign policy of the nation is conducted on principles

opposed to the Scriptures—injurious to the Church of Christ—and, in many instances, repugnant to sound principles of national morality and genuine liberty. Believing Britain to be a part of the Antichristian system, we cannot incorporate with the nation, nor vow allegiance to institutions which many good men extol and admire:—1. Because they are immoral and Antichristian. 2. Because they are based upon the subversion and ruin of a system established at the Reformation, which, as being founded on the Word of God, and ratified by Scriptural engagements, is morally unalterable. 3. Because these evils were originally introduced, and are still upheld, in opposition to the clearest light of Divine revelation.

By the Legislative Union between Britain and Ireland, in 1801, the latter became in every respect an integral part of the Empire. She is pledged by this compact to the perpetual support of the Prelatical Establishment, to the maintenance of the Constitution, by which rulers are set up, without any regard to moral or Scriptural qualifications, and by oaths of office bound to uphold much that is unscriptural and immoral. The Act for the Emancipation of Roman Catholics, passed in 1829, set aside the national protest, such as it was, against Popery, and made admissible to offices of power and trust the open enemies of Scriptural truth. Since the passing of this measure, Papists have been appointed to seats in the Legislature, the Privy Council, and the Judicial Bench; and the malign influence of the Papacy is extensively felt in all departments of the State. Such is the spirit and power of the compact body of Roman Catholics in Parliament, that they not only retard and oppose such legislation as tends to promote moral improvement and Protestant interests, but they can, at times, defeat the Government, and impede all right legislation. Hence, the grievous national iniquity of adopting and largely endowing out of the consolidated fund of the Empire the Popish College of Maynooth. In like manner, Popish Reformatories and National Schools are maintained—a large majority of which are under the exclusive patronage of the Romish priesthood, some of them being taught in

convents and monasteries, by nuns, and orders of the clergy. These measures, by restricting the Word of God, or excluding it from colleges and schools, and thus preventing the youth of the land from having access to it, subserve the interests of the Man of Sin.

On such grounds, we testify against the system of civil government established in this country. The whole course of British policy towards Ireland tends to confirm the position that Britain is "a horn of the Beast." It must, therefore, be either totally reversed, or it will entail upon the nation those destructive judgments which are denounced in the Divine word for the final overthrow of the Antichristian system. Covenanted witnesses cannot incorporate with a State which encourages and endows the avowed enemies of the Lord's Anointed, and "decrees iniquity by a law." They must be content to wear their sackcloth, and to be as aliens in their native land, rather than compromise their allegiance to Messiah the Prince, or sanction evils which His Word expressly condemns. It would be a plain abandonment of an essential part of a Covenanted Testimony to accept of seats in the British Legislature, or to vote at the election of representatives in Parliament, who are required to swear oaths, binding them to support the complex, Prelatic, and Erastian Constitution which was established at the Revolution. As they cannot, without incurring guilt, sit in Parliament themselves, neither can they employ others to do so, in their name. They are likewise precluded from composing a part of the Executive of the Crown, by holding public offices, civil or military; nor can they, consistently with their profession, co-operate in administering laws, which are in opposition to the Word of God.

Protesting against these National evils, we yet desire to feel grateful for the peace and privileges which we enjoy. We recognize it to be our duty as individuals to employ whatever influence we possess in promoting the peace and prosperity of the land of our nativity; and, avoiding identification with corrupt systems, to advance the ends of public justice, and the good of the commonwealth, when this can be done without sinful conditions. We love

the empire to which we belong, on account of the equity of its laws, the impartiality of its courts of justice, and the protection which it affords to life and property. It is endeared to us by the large number of saints, who, in different ages, have been prepared in it for a blessed immortality; and by the struggles of patriots, confessors, and martyrs, whose names adorn its history, and whose monuments are scattered over its surface. We love it as a nation dedicated to God in solemn covenant, and appropriately styled, Hephzi-bah and Beulah—(Is. lxii. 4.) We love it as containing, at the present day, a larger number of the people of God than any other. We love it on account of its many Christian institutions, whose object is to disseminate the glorious Gospel, and accelerate the coming of Christ's kingdom. Nevertheless, we are not insensible to the evils inherent in its constitution and administration. And we regard it as no proof of patriotism to disguise or extenuate such public delinquencies as provoke the Most High, and expose a nation to Divine judgments.

Section IV.—Testimony against the Romish Church in Ireland.

Popery has, for many centuries, held Ireland as one of its strongholds. Gradually displacing the early church which was substantially Presbyterian and Evangelical, the Romish system was fully established in 1155, by the Pope granting the kingdom to the English monarch, thus enslaving the nation to compass his own ambitious projects. At the Reformation no effectual steps were taken to introduce a purer faith. The withholding of the Word of God in their own language from the native Irish, and the long-continued misrule of the English Government, have served to rivet the chains of their spiritual thraldom, and to throw the people wholly under the power of the priesthood. Thus have they been confirmed in Papal superstition and prejudice, and rendered almost inaccessible to attempts for their spiritual illumination. Notwithstanding the various social changes that have taken place in

Ireland of late years, which have served to diminish considerably the Romish population, and thereby to weaken the power of the priesthood, and, to some extent, open the way for Scriptural instruction among the people, the Popish hierarchy still wields unbroken dominion. The Romish Church is thoroughly organized, having a large staff of clerical dignitaries and agencies of every available kind, with apparently unlimited resources at their command. Besides a College endowed out of the national treasury, it has now a University and many theological colleges and schools devoted to the training of candidates for the priesthood.

Two things have of late tended powerfully to strengthen the Popish system in Ireland—the admission of Romanists to positions of power in the Empire, and the Ultramontane policy of the Court of Rome. Through the former, the influence of the Government is largely wielded for the advancement of Popery, and grants of public money are secured in various ways to promote its interests. By means of the latter, the abettors of the Papacy have been more closely united in counsel, in action, and determination, to retain in spiritual bondage the mass of the people, and to compel the Government to yield, more and more, to their insidious and insatiable demands. It is matter of profound regret and humiliation that British statesmen of all political parties lend their influence so readily to promote the designs of the Papacy, and that a number of Protestant Dissenters and Presbyterians, who have occupied seats in the Legislature, have so generally given their support to uphold and extend Popery in return for similar favours done to them.

We hereby solemnly renew our fathers' protest against the idolatry, blasphemy, and manifold corruptions and oppressions of this iniquitous system. As bound by our sacred covenants, we earnestly testify against all assistance given by the State, under any pretence whatever, for the support and extension of a system of such gross and complicated wickedness. We would utter a loud and constant warning against entrusting to Papists, whose first allegiance is ever given to the Pope, places of power and

influence in a reformed nation; and we regard this as cause sufficient why witnesses for Scriptural truth should stand apart from the political system of these lands, assured that those who share in the sins shall likewise be partakers of the plagues of mystical Babylon. Lamenting our own neglect and sin, and that of others, in having attempted so little for delivering our countrymen from the ignorance, superstition, and bondage of Antichrist, we regard ourselves as specially called to vigorous, prayerful, and persevering exertions for the subversion of Popery, and for the spiritual illumination of those who are under its dominion. Assured by infallible predictions that its downfall is speedily approaching, and fervently desiring that the descendants of a people who, before its grinding yoke was imposed upon Ireland, were renowned for zeal in spreading saving knowledge throughout Europe, may yet occupy an honorable place in the work of evangelizing the nations, we hold ourselves pledged, to endeavour with increased earnestness to make known to our countrymen God's light and salvation.

Section V.—Testimony against the Established Church in Ireland.

The Prelatical Church, as established in England at the period of the Reformation, and afterwards extended to Ireland, retained from its origin manifold evils, against which faithful witnesses have constantly protested. Prelacy is a system destitute of warrant in the Divine Word. Its tendency is to secularize and corrupt the Church, and to deprive the people of their Christian rights, by establishing a lordship over God's heritage. The English Reformers, acting on the wrong and dangerous principle, that whatever in the Romish Church was not expressly condemned in Scripture was to be retained, have retained many of the distinctive rites and usages of Rome. The Headship of the Church is declared by statute to be an inherent right of the Crown. The consequences of this usurpation are injurious in the extreme. The way is thus opened for the admission of the worst errors in doc-

trine, and the grossest corruptions in worship. Scarcely a vestige of liberty has been left to the National Church in anything that respects ecclesiastical government or the power of Scriptural discipline.

In Ireland, the Established Church has been all along in prostrate subjection to civil rulers, and employed by them, not for the purpose of spreading saving light and truth throughout the dark parts of the land, but rather for the purpose of maintaining British ascendancy and for promoting the objects of political partisanship and power. The enormous revenues of the Church are appropriated, not for supplying the spiritual wants of the perishing masses of the population, but largely to uphold the lordly style and dignity of Prelates, and to further the ambitious projects of aristocratic families. The rich endowments of cathedral churches are largely expended in supporting clergymen, for the performance of ritualistic services, which tend only to formalism and superstition. The expenditure of so much wealth where no spiritual instruction or pastoral care whatsoever is rendered to the persons who contribute it, has excited the most powerful prejudices against Protestantism. The proper work of a National Church in Ireland has been utterly neglected. Of late, indeed, efforts for giving Scriptural instruction to Romanists have been originated and sustained by excellent persons connected with the Establishment; but these have been made by way of voluntary contribution, not out of public endowments which ought always to have been expended for the dissemination of Bible truth and education in the land. The propagation of error in regard to fundamental doctrines of the Gospel, the corruption of ordinances by empty forms and symbolic usages inherited from Popery—the unrighteousness of its revenues—and the oppressions of its courts, furnish grounds of irreconcilable dissent from the Established Church in Ireland, and of decided protest against a system which is at once unscriptural and injurious.

It is, at the same time, cheerfully admitted that there are numbers of excellent men, both in the ministry and membership of the Prelatic Church in Ireland who have

been distinguished by learning, piety, and large-hearted devotion to the cause of Christ; and that, compared with the Establishment in England, it is vastly superior both in respect to the maintenance of evangelical truth, and its freedom from extreme Ritualistic practices and tendencies towards Romanism. Yet we are constrained to declare, that instead of being, as its admirers allege, "the bulwark of Protestantism," it has tended to confirm Romanists in their prejudices against the truth, to impede the evangelization of the people, and to damage the cause of Scriptural Protestantism.

Section VI.—Testimony against the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.

The position of the large Presbyterian Body in Ireland—the General Assembly, formed by the union of the Synod of Ulster with the Secession Church—we feel constrained for many reasons to condemn. The larger of these bodies, almost from the time of the Revolution, was infected with doctrinal error, and guilty of neglect of Scriptural discipline, and, as the natural consequence, corruption in worship and laxity in practice prevailed. With the disuse of subscription to the Westminster Confession of Faith, Arminian and even Arian heresies were held and disseminated by numbers throughout the Church. Mere morality was preached instead of the Gospel of free grace; and the ordinances of family and social worship were almost unknown. Ministers and elders were themselves not unfrequently worldly and immoral men; whilst persons ignorant, erroneous, and openly scandalous had free access to the fellowship of the church. When, in the year 1829, it was resolved to require from each minister an avowal of the doctrine of the Trinity, a number of ministers and people who held Unitarian sentiments, remonstrated and left the Synod. No censure or condemnation, however, was pronounced against those who had blasphemed "the only Lord God and our Saviour," and there were still

retained in its fellowship some who entertained Arian sentiments. Whilst we cordially rejoiced in this separation, we regard the manner in which it took place as discovering unfaithfulness on the part of those who contended for the doctrine of the Saviour's Divinity. In 1835, the Synod of Ulster enacted that subscription to the Westminster Confession should be required in future of entrants into the ministry and eldership. Subscription was not demanded, however, of elders who were already in office, though it was well known that a large number of them held Arminian, and some of them Arian opinions. No acknowledgment of the Confession is required of the membership of the church. It must be manifest to all, that the Body that imposes so limited a subscription, cannot, as a church, be properly said to make the Westminster Confession its doctrinal standard.

While all right-hearted men must lament the divisions of the Reformed Church, and should earnestly labour and pray that they may be healed, it is evident that no proper union can be formed on the sacrifice of any Scriptural principle. Truth must be the basis of all holy concord. We are required to "love the truth and peace;" the truth first and then peace—truth as the foundation of peace. The union, in 1840, of the Synod of Ulster and the Secession Synod was contrived and consummated chiefly by the ministry: the consent of the inferior courts was neither sought nor obtained. The distinctive attainments of one of the parties were hurriedly cast aside, for the sake of union. Up till the period in which it took place, it was required of ministers and elders of the Secession, at their ordination, to make a solemn profession of their belief in the perpetual obligation of the Covenants, National and Solemn League. Instead of this, in the "Basis of Union," a vague avowal of "the moral obligation of public religious covenanting" was substituted. All mention of either the perpetual obligation or the renovation of the covenants was deliberately laid aside, in order to secure agreement. A testimony for Reformation principles, which was once displayed by the Secession, has disappeared; and acquaintance with the faithful

contendings of our forefathers is not now required of those who enter the fellowship of the church. By this union, the Secession body has given up very important parts of their former profession, and has been brought very much to the level, in doctrine and practice, of the larger body, instead of elevating it to a higher standard.

The continued want of faithful discipline, and consequent irregularity and defection in the fellowship and worship of the church, are evils of serious magnitude in the Presbyterian Church in this country. Of late years there has been great improvement in many respects, still these evils prevail, and are of most injurious tendency. Many are admitted to the membership of the church, and to the sealing ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, who are ignorant, neglectful of family, social, and public worship, and who, in their lives, are openly immoral. The ordinance of praise is corrupted by the use of hymns of human composition, although the General Assembly has solemnly declared that "The Psalms of David are the only authorized psalmody." Persons without License or proper qualifications are permitted to officiate in many pulpits on the Sabbath. While Revival or Congregational Prayer-meetings are in some places observed, Fellowship Prayer-meetings are still neglected. We rejoice to know that there is a large and increasing number of persons in connection with the General Assembly who attend upon and adorn the ordinances and duties of religion; yet we cannot be unconcerned that so wide-spread neglect continues to prevail; nor can we be but grieved at the dishonor done to Christ, and the injury done to immortal souls by the indiscriminate admission of unworthy and scandalous persons to the sealing ordinances of the Lord's house.

The connection of the General Assembly with THE STATE is plainly inconsistent with Scriptural principle and duty. By its members accepting seats in the Legislature, or offices in the administration, or voting for persons to hold such positions, they abandon the grand principles of the Second Reformation. These required the Constitution to be framed in accordance with the

Word of God, and that those placed in civil office should be possessed of Scriptural qualifications and be pledged to the maintenance of the true religion. The present British Constitution makes no pretensions to a Scriptural character, and is, in many respects, in antagonism to the Covenanted Reformation. For Presbyterians to bind themselves by oath to the suppport of such a system, either personally or by representatives, is palpably inconsistent with a full profession of Christ, as well as incompatible with a due regard to the "moral obligation of the public religious covenants" of our fathers.

The reception of the annual PARLIAMENTARY GRANT by the ministers of the General Assembly, still called *Regium Donum*, is to be condemned on various grounds. It cannot with any proper regard to truth, be urged that it was conferred at first on Presbyterian ministers, as a compensation for the tithes of the Irish Established Church, of which they were never regarded as ministers. Nor if this plea were true, would it be any vindication of their acceptance of the grant. *Regium Donum* was first given out of the *Secret Service* money of the perfidious and profligate Charles II., who was at the time persecuting to the death faithful Presbyterians in Scotland, and cruelly oppressing the Non-Conformists in England. From such hands, and at such a time, a gift was not to be accepted by those who would testify faithfully for Christ, or who would manifest real sympathy with persecuted brethren. Its reception was in direct opposition to the solemn warning, "Thou shalt not take a gift; for a gift doth blind the eyes of the wise, and pervert the words of the righteous." This baneful influence has been constantly manifest in the tone and procedure of the church in its dealings with the Government to the present day. The whole history of the Irish *Regium Donum* displays, on the one hand, the design of rulers to obtain control over the Church, in order to secure its acquiescence in favour of the Establishment, and render it an instrument to help forward their own political objects; and, on the other hand, it displays the unfaithfulness of the Church in refraining from opposing measures, however iniquitous

and injurious to the nation, lest it should imperil their own endowment.

The acceptance of *Regium Donum* cannot but be regarded as inconsistent with true allegiance to Christ, injurious to the independence and faithfulness of ministers, and to the spiritual interests of the people, as well as incompatible with a testimony for truth. The servants of Christ should avoid ensnaring connections with worldly rulers. The Redeemer's Church can never come into fellowship with corrupt civil systems, or be stipendiary to statesmen who show no regard to Scriptural principle, without incurring the guilt of unfaithfulness, and running the risk of being itself corrupted. The royal bounty is granted to Presbyterian ministers not from any regard to Christ or to the superior claims of truth, inasmuch as Papists and Unitarians share on the same principle in the State-largesses. It is conferred solely and avowedly on the ground of political or infidel expediency, and its effects are, in many respects, highly injurious. It induces ministers, from shame or self-interest, to be more or less silent in relation to the sins and the anti-christian relationships of the nation. The reception of it prevents all effective opposition to so gross misappropriations of the public treasure, as the grants to Maynooth College, to Popish Schools and Chaplaincies, the revenues hitherto secured to the Established Church, or the proposal to endow the priesthood of the Church of Rome. This grant to the ministers of a large and comparatively wealthy community, furnished out of the taxes paid by Romanists, and the smaller self-supporting Dissenting Bodies, like the larger revenues of the Irish Establishment, is manifestly unjust, creates strong prejudices against the truth, and tends directly and inevitably to the establishment of Popery. Moreover, it is a standing proof of the deficiency of Christian life and liberality, and of the want of public spirit, and of a proper sense of honor and independence in the whole body. It prevents the people realising their privilege and responsibility in the support of the ministry, tends to cherish among them a narrow, worldly, and dependent spirit,

discourages liberality, represses an honest testimony for the truth, and thus hinders the establishment of the Kingdom of Christ. We cannot but regard it as both sinful and shameful to receive an endowment of such a character, and involving such consequences. Its entire withdrawal or instant surrender, on high Christian principles—instead of being, as its recipients would represent, "a tremendous shock to Protestantism and to the British Power in Ireland," and the extinction of many congregations—would mightily advance the best interests of the ministers and congregations of the Assembly, contribute powerfully to the promotion of Christian liberality and zeal, and be the reviving of pure and undefiled religion throughout the land.

On such grounds as these, we are constrained to testify against the General Assembly in Ireland, and to refuse ecclesiastical connection with it. At the same time, we unfeignedly rejoice in the revived tone of evangelical preaching and sound doctrine throughout this large section of the Church—in its nearer approach, in any respect, to a Scriptural standard—and in all its exertions for spreading the truth among Romanists in this country, and for prosecuting missionary enterprises among Jews and Gentiles in other lands.

Section VII.—Testimony against various other Systems existing in Ireland.

Whilst loving all who love Christ the Head, and are engaged in maintaining any part of His truth, we are constrained to bear public testimony against systems of error more or less dangerous and extensive.

1. Unitarianism.—In the strongest manner we testify against Unitarianism, as it exists in this country, embracing Sabellian, Arian, and Socinian sentiments, and manifesting of late Rationalistic and Infidel tendencies. By propounding and disseminating soul-destroying errors respecting the Godhead—the Person of Christ—the work of Atonement—the character and work of the Holy Spirit—the present state of human nature—the inspira-

tion and authority of the Scriptures—and the future condition and destiny of men, it exhibits itself to be a mere system of natural religion. Denying the fundamental articles of revealed truth, it removes out of view all that is distinctive of the glorious Gospel of the Saviour's grace; and is guilty of subverting the sinner's hope of salvation, and, at the same time, of smoothing the way to open infidelity and universal scepticism.

2. ANABAPTISM.—We testify against the Anabaptists, or, as they style themselves, Baptists, because, by denying that the infant seed of professed believing parents are proper subjects of baptism, they break the connection divinely established between the New Testament Church and the Old, in which the infant children of God's people were recognised as members, and received the seal of God's gracious Covenant. They also take away a precious privilege from believing parents and their children—practically reject the command given by the Saviour in the Apostolic Commission requiring us to disciple all nations, baptising and teaching them—are opposed to the practice of the Apostles and the primitive Church of baptizing whole households—and exclude from the seal of the Covenant those who are expressly included in its promise. We testify likewise against the Anabaptists on account of their teaching that *immersion* is the only allowable mode of baptism—inasmuch as this dogma receives no support from the Scriptural terms employed to declare the manner of administering the ordinance—as immersion is not in harmony with the practice recorded in the New Testament, and is inapplicable to and unsuitable for the state and circumstances of the Church universally diffused throughout the earth, and is in opposition to the symbolical import of the ordinance as referring to the gracious outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Anabaptists, too, have set aside the Presbyterial government and order of the Church, following generally the Congregational form; and, to a large extent, the ordinance of praise is corrupted by the use of uninspired hymns. On such grounds we testify against the system as being opposed to the faith and practice of the Church, as it has existed

in all ages, as being intensely sectarian, and as inflicting real privation and injury upon a large and interesting class—the infant members of the Church of Christ.

3. CONGREGATIONALISM.—The system of Congregationalism, or Independency, assumes that each separate assembly of Christians meeting in one place for worship, is a church, separate from and independent of all others—that the whole power of government and discipline is lodged in the hands of church members—that ministers and elders have no spiritual authority—and that there is no warrant for Presbyterial assemblies and courts of appeal. In all these respects it is opposed to the order instituted by Christ and established by His apostles, in the primitive Christian Church. Inconsistent with the unity of the church as one body, it divests ecclesiastical officers of the power which Christ has given them for rule as well as for edification, and deprives the members of the church of the right of appeal to higher courts. Congregationalists, moreover, reject and denounce creeds and confessions, meaning such creeds and confessions as have been carefully prepared and adopted by the church as subordinate standards and tests of orthodoxy for the whole body—groundlessly asserting that these are thrust into the place of God's Word, and tyrannically enforced on the consciences of men. At the same time, they themselves exact from ministers at ordination, and from others, on admission to membership, a public creed or confession of faith, of the orthodoxy of which the church is supposed to judge at the time without any fixed standard, and thereupon to grant or refuse admission. These extemporized creeds, which are as numerous as the members of their church, must, in general, be very crude, incomplete, and unsatisfactory productions—being liable to more than all the abuses, without the undeniable advantages of a common and accepted confession of the united faith of the church, based upon and subordinate to the Word of God, which alone is the infallible rule of faith and practice. This system cannot maintain doctrinal purity in the Church, or restore it when corrupted; and it precludes combined ecclesiastical action

for extending the kingdom of Christ. We gladly admit that the doctrines of evangelical religion are in general held by Congregationalists, and there is considerable regard shown to spirituality of communion, yet it is notorious that loose sentiments and even fundamental errors respecting the Inspiration of the Scriptures, the nature and extent of the Atonement, and other doctrines, are taught in Independent churches.

4. METHODISM.—This system, which was originated in England by John Wesley, in the year 1729, and propagated by his co-adjutors and followers, has spread to a large extent throughout this country. Commencing in the Church of England, it claimed at first to aim only at the revival and greater efficiency of its worship. The various changes and divisions that have taken place among Methodists have made its connection with the National Church less intimate than that which was contemplated by its founder. Methodism is still to be regarded as favourable to Prelacy rather than protesting against it. It embraces the errors of Arminianism. Dishonoring the finished work of the Saviour, by the dogma of an indefinite atonement; detracting from the glory of the Spirit, by teaching the freedom of the human will in conversion, and that there is inherent power in the sinner to receive savingly the offers of the Gospel; and laying undue stress upon uncertain frames and feelings, it excites prejudice against the truth and injures the Gospel system. The government and arrangements of the Methodist Societies are modelled by human policy, and are not in conformity with any Scriptural prescription. They have, therefore, in many cases issued in despotism, taking away Christian rights and liberties both from ministers and people. This system undervalues a proper call and appointment to the ministry, and gives the largest scope to the unscriptural practice of lay-preaching. The worship of the Methodist Body is characterized by the almost total disuse of inspired Psalms, and by the use of hymns, many of which are erroneous and deceptive; and its obvious design and tendency is to encourage undue excitement and a dangerous sensationalism.

5. PLYMOUTHISM.—The members of this sect, who are generally known by the name DARBYITES, from one of their leaders, or PLYMOUTH BRETHREN, from the place where, in 1830, they had their origin, assume to themselves the title of Christian Brethren. Like others who loudly denounce all human creeds and confessions, and yet require every brother to make his own confession, they have no common standard of doctrine for which they can be held responsible. It is, therefore, difficult to ascertain exactly what are their peculiar views. In some points they resemble Quakers, in others they are at one with the Baptists, and generally they hold millenarian views of the second coming and kingdom of Christ. On nearly all the leading doctrines of religion they teach erroneous or one-sided and exaggerated opinions, and by these mainly, as well as by their intensely sectarian and proselytizing spirit, are they distinguished from other Christians. The doctrine, that the Moral Law is no rule of duty to believers, or binding upon them at all, which is Antinomianism—that repentance is unnecessary—that Sanctification is imparted and perfected at once—that Faith is the assurance of personal salvation—that Prayer is not the duty of unbelievers—and that believers should not ask for pardon, or for the Holy Spirit, are commonly taught among them. By such doctrines they have separated themselves from the faith of the Reformed churches, and must be regarded as dangerous and schismatical. We testify against them, moreover, for their rejection of the Scriptural office of the Christian ministry, recognising as ministers all whom they consider to be sufficiently gifted—for their denial of the duty of the church to support the ministry according to the ordinance of Christ and of the sanctity and obligation of the Christian Sabbath—and for their uncharitable and sectarian spirit, in refusing to admit, as Christian churches, those who do not embrace their extreme views, and who are opposed to their disorderly and unscriptural proceedings.

6. MILLENARIANISM.—Against a gross and literal system of prophetic interpretation, which has obtained chiefly at periods of religious excitement—anciently de-

signated CHILIASM, and in modern times, MILLENARIANISM—we regard ourselves as solemnly called to testify. This system, which is publicly taught from the pulpit and the press by ministers of the Establishment, and by Presbyterians and Nonconformists maintains that, previous to the Millenium, the Redeemer will come personally to judge the quick and the dead; that He will then raise either the martyrs who suffered for His sake, or the whole of the saints who had lived before, and will reign with them at Jerusalem, in visible majesty and glory, for a thousand years. Contending for the literal interpretation of prophecies that refer to the last times, they furthermore maintain that a new and enlarged temple shall be built at Jerusalem—that animal sacrifices shall be revived, as a eucharistical commemoration of the atonement finished; and some even hold that our present Bible, which they say is fitted only to a suffering state of the church, will be superseded by a new revelation suited to her triumphant condition.

We testify against such sentiments, as opposed to the general faith and hope of the church, and of most mischievous tendency. The doctrine of the pre-millenial advent and personal reign of Christ on earth is based upon false principles of Scripture interpretation, and is plainly opposed to those passages which represent His second coming as immediately connected with the general resurrection and last judgment, the universal conflagration, and the allotment of the righteous and wicked to their eternal state of reward and punishment. This system is manifestly inconsistent with the *spirituality* of the Mediatorial dominion; and its whole tendency is to fill Christians with carnal expectations—to revive the exploded opinions and rites of Judaism, and to bring back the church to the "beggarly elements," from which Christ has, by His atoning death, and the mission of His Spirit, for ever made her free. The Millenarian system is not only detrimental to the unity of the church, and the progress of true spirituality, but obstructive to Christian efforts for the universal establishment of the Redeemer's kingdom in the earth. By declaring, as its

advocates do, that the design of the present dispensation, is not the conversion of the world and the ingathering of the Jews, but "only the calling of an elect people out of the Gentiles," and that the conversion of Jew and Gentile will be effected only by the Redeemer's personal appearance and reign on the earth, the church's great Commission is virtually set aside, the motives to exertion for the world's evangelization are removed, and the many precious promises that guarantee its success are rendered vain and delusive. Discarding such views, our duty is to labour and pray for the conversion of all nations, and for the establishment of the Redeemer's kingdom over all the earth—looking for His Millenial coming in the glory of His Word and Spirit, and in the power of his judgments on Antichristian, Mohammedan, Pagan, and all opposing systems—and for the second coming, and "glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour," to judge the world in righteousness, and to terminate the present dispensation, by receiving the redeemed to heaven, and consigning the wicked to everlasting destruction.

7. VOLUNTARYISM.—The principle that the State, as such, has nothing to do with religion, and that the Church and State should be entirely separate for all moral and religious purposes, we condemn as utterly at variance with the contendings and attainments of the Scottish Reformers, as opposed to the Headship of the Mediator over the nations, the universal supremacy of His Word, as calculated to exert a baleful influence on religion and morality, and as having a tendency to prevent the nations from returning to a Scriptural standard of civil government. In relation to the small bodies of SECEDERS, whether in a separate organization, or merged into the United Presbyterian Church of Scotland, we regard the original grounds of our fathers' condemnation of their Testimony as still remaining unchanged. There are, besides, additional grounds of testifying against such as accept endowment from a corrupt Government—given on a principle that is essentially infidel and indiscriminate—and against those who, in palpable contradiction of the original principles of the Secession, avow Voluntary

sentiments. While we rejoice that there are any, however few, that refuse to accept endowments, which are conferred equally on the advocates of error and those who maintain evangelical truth; and while we sincerely lament that obstacles exist to prevent the closest union among the professed friends of the Reformation, we yet regard the principle of the entire separation of the Church from an immoral civil system, and, at the same time, the principle that rulers and nations, in their public capacity, are nevertheless bound to act in professed subjection to the law of Christ, as essential to a permanent basis for union and ecclesiastical fellowship.

8. LATITUDINARIANISM.—The Latitudinarian principle is, that a few plain and general articles in religion are essential or fundamental, and that all else is unimportant or circumstantial, and should in no wise affect ecclesiastical communion. Those who adopt this principle call loudly for charity and union in the Church; and denounce a faithful testimony as bigotry, and intolerance. This scheme is plausible, and well fitted to mislead the unthinking and unwary; and in an age when strict religious principle is disliked, and there is much profession without corresponding godly practice, it seems likely to become more widely diffused. Notwithstanding its pretensions to liberality, it is both destructive and intolerant, rejecting as it does the crown-rights and glory of the Redeemer, and the imperative claims of Divine truth, in which the best interests of human society are involved. By undervaluing truths clearly revealed, and duties plainly inculcated, and by resorting to the arbitrary and ever-varying distinction between doctrines *essential* and *non-essential*, it sets aside Divine authority, and thus tends gradually to weaken and undermine Christianity itself. By pleading for *open communion*, and, at the same time, upholding separate religious denominations, it perpetuates division in the Church, and prevents that perfect union which is promised, when "there shall be one Lord, and His name one in all the earth."

Those who advocate the Latitudinarian scheme differ in their views, as to the extent to which union should be

carried. Some would represent the difference between Pedobaptists and Antipedobaptists—between Calvinists and Arminians—and between the various unendowed Churches as unimportant; others would embrace in one broad National Church all the different sections of Protestantism; and some would even make the difference between Protestants and Romanists no barrier to union and fellowship. With persons of Latitudinarian sentiments, the utmost repugnance is manifested against a Scriptural testimony in behalf of the Redeemer's royal prerogatives and the proper application of its principles, in condemning Erastianism, and in promoting purity in the communion of the Church, and the due observance of all divinely appointed ordinances. It is observable that this scheme is generally advocated by those who are in connection with the larger ecclesiastical bodies, that are characterised by corruption in worship, and laxity in practice, and that seek to draw into fellowship with them smaller and purer bodies. Even in the least objectionable form in which the Latitudinarian scheme is held in our day, its obvious tendency is to lead persons to undervalue and reject one truth after another, and to make little or no account of the progress of error and corruption, provided what are vaguely termed the fundamentals of religion are still preserved.

In opposition to such lax and dangerous views, our duty is—"Whereto we have already attained, to walk by the same rule, to mind the same thing." The Apostolic command, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, is to "withdraw from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us." (2 Thess. iii. 6.) Zion's exalted King offers the highest encouragement to those who faithfully maintain His truth amidst opposition and reproach. "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown." (Rev. iii. 10, 11.)

Section VIII.—The Conclusion.

In presenting this Historical View of the Truths for which faithful servants of Christ have nobly contended, and which martyrs have sealed with their blood, we have aimed to give an explicit testimony in favour of the Scriptural principles of all past Reformations, and especially of the Covenanted Reformation in Britain and Ireland. We have endeavoured to omit nothing for which Christ's faithful witnesses have contended; and to embrace nothing but what is sanctioned by the supreme and infallible rule of Holy Scripture. It appears to us an important and necessary duty to testify specially in behalf of principles which are not acknowledged or acted on by other churches that yet embrace in their fellowship many of the saints of God. While we sincerely rejoice that so much Scriptural doctrine is held in these churches, and that they are doing so much for the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom in the earth; while we gladly appreciate the talents and piety found in their ministers and members, and are ready to co-operate with them in every way as private Christians, in promoting the cause of truth and righteousness, of temperance and beneficence in the land, we cannot enter into ecclesiastical fellowship with them, save on the platform exhibited in this Testimony. Nor can we consistently join in the communion of any other church, by waiting on its ministry, or partaking of its sacraments, while it continues opposed to the principles and position thus publicly avouched, which we believe to be inseparably connected with the universal spread and ultimate triumph of Christ's cause in the earth.

To some, we may appear to have been needlessly particular in tracing the progress of defection; while by others we may be accused of presumption and a sectarian spirit, in testifying against public bodies, civil and ecclesiastical, approved of by many who are eminent for gifts and usefulness. To such allegations, our only reply is, that in performing what we regard as a solemn and urgent duty, we have endeavoured in the spirit of love to obey

plain Scripture precepts, and to follow the approved example of those who have obtained a good report, and whose names are recorded with honor in the imperishable annals of the church. What has been testified against has all along been condemned by those who have desired to walk in the footsteps of the flock, and who have set the advancement of Christ's glory, and the purity and prosperity of the church, above their earthly joy. Such evils, in our judgment, have deeply injured the interests of true religion, hindered the increase and efficiency of the church, and added immensely to the guilt and to the sufferings of the people and the nation.

Committing ourselves and our cause to Him who searches all hearts, and calmly awaiting the impartial judgment of posterity, in the promised and long-expected period of light and enlargement to the church, when "the people of the saints of the Most High shall take the Kingdom and possess it," we would earnestly and constantly pray—"Arise, O God, and plead thine own cause." "Return, we beseech Thee, O God of hosts; look down from heaven, and behold, and visit this vine: And the vineyard which thy right hand hath planted, and the branch which Thou madest strong for Thyself." And, notwithstanding the fewness and the weakness of those who are at present united in maintaining and diffusing a Testimony for Christ's supreme and unlimited dominion, and the seemingly insuperable difficulties that rise like mountains in their path, we would join with our whole hearts in the triumphant song and noble doxology of the ancient church—"There shall be an handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains; the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon; and *they* of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth. His name shall endure for ever: His name shall be continued as long as the sun: and *men* shall be blessed in Him: all nations shall call Him blessed. Blessed *be* the Lord God, the God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things. And blessed *be* His glorious name for ever: and let the whole earth be filled *with* His glory; Amen and Amen."

TESTIMONY,

BY THE

REFORMED

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Annie M. Clarke

PART IV.

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another, in a bond of affection and sympathy, but it brings them under a new, and peculiarly-enforced obligation, to love their neighbour as themselves. Besides the common connection arising from relation, and dependence upon others, Christians are linked to the race of man, by the law of love; a law obligatory, as it is pleasing and powerful wherever it is felt. Every individual can, and should do something. Some individuals may do much. But, in general, single and insulated effort can do little, in comparison of social and well combined operation.

It is more immediately to our present purpose, to remark, that it is the duty of the church, in her organized and collective capacity, to exhibit a Confession of faith, and to give a faithful Testimony to the truths of the word of God, and to the cause of Christ. The ecclesiastical union is distinguished by peculiar characteristics, from societies erected upon the ordinary principles of human association, and has special advantages. A society, however wisely constructed, and however multiplied in its members, is only an accumulation into one great agency of the power that is in the individuals composing it; securing an extent of result, which the efforts of all the individuals apart could not produce, but never acquiring authority above what is constituted by conventional arrangement. But the church is the positive institution of Jesus Christ. Her objects, laws, and offices, are specifically and authoritatively defined—the places and duties of her members, official and

private, are respectively laid out—when acting lawfully, in an organised capacity, she has authority from Christ—and she has the promise of his special presence and benediction. The church is not, therefore, a merely spontaneous association, like the numerous societies erected among Christians, for specified objects, and formed upon the simple principle of co-operation; but she is an association instituted by Christ, and receiving from him her constitution and laws, and having the promise of his special blessing. Other societies may, in certain circumstances, be called to co-operate with the church, but they can never supersede her, nor are they to receive a preference, or be put in comparison with her. This association, as such, and with the sanction of that authority which Christ has delegated to her, should exhibit a Testimony for the truth.

The testimony of the church should embrace divine truth, in its bearings upon the relations of man to God, and of man, as a moral and fallen creature, placed under a moral and a gracious dispensation. It should comprehend the constitution and ordinances of the church, the privileges and duties of her fellowship, and the relation of the individual Christian to the church. It should also include the original natural and moral relations of man to man, bringing them all under law to Christ. And it should comprehend also, the relations of man to the eternal world. The truth, on these subjects should be stated with perspicuity, and faithfully defended from present attacks made upon

it; and the testimony of the church should be exhibited with all due publicity, and in the proper season. And in times of reformation, it should embrace, under the direction of Scripture, the attainments which the church had reached, and faithfully protest against all departure from truth.

Impressed with these views, the Reformed Presbyterian Church submit their humble Testimony to the truths of the Word of God, and covenanted profession of the Reformed Church of Scotland. In doing this, they request that the following things be understood:—

1. They avow their faith, in the doctrines and institutions of religion, on the direct evidence of their authority in the Scriptures. The Word of God, and this alone, is the object of a divine faith. It is, accordingly, adduced under the respective articles.

2. They view the Reformation to have been a work of God, and a great blessing to the land, which it is their duty faithfully to record, and to tell to posterity. They refer to the Covenants, to the Westminster standards, and to the testimonies of the Martyrs, as illustrative of the principles of the reformation, approving of them under the authority and correction of the Supreme Standard. They acknowledge the moral obligation of the national covenants against Popery and Prelacy, and lift their testimony against these

systems, which still sway such an influence in our land. They have received as their subordinate standards, the Westminster Confession and Catechisms, and have accordingly referred, under the different articles, to the chapters in the Confession, and the questions in the Larger Catechism.

3. The departure from the Reformation, by church and state, particularly at the Revolution, is the immediate occasion of their Dissent and Testimony. The period and place in which God has cast their lot, have laid them under the necessity of embracing, according to the best of their knowledge, the scriptural cause of the Reformation, and of vindicating it, in some important points in which they consider it to have been unfaithfully dealt by, or abandoned. "Asking for the old paths and the good way," they are not chargeable with schism; nor have they originated the divisions by which the church has been rent; but they continue to this day, witnessing, both to small and great, none other things than those for which their fathers contended and bled.

4. They have found it necessary to refer to errors, not only in the abstract propositions containing them, but in connection with the names under which they are known and propagated. In doing this, nothing is more remote from their minds, than indulging malevolent feeling, or invidious personality. They have, indeed, declared the

truths in which they believe, they have condemned the opposite errors, and they have testified against persons who have abandoned truth, and embraced error; but they have done all this, they hope, in the spirit of that "charity, which is not easily provoked, which thinketh no evil—which rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth."

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TESTIMONY, &c.

CHAPTER I.

DIVINE REVELATION.

1. The most diligent improvement of human reason, and study of the works of creation and providence, are inadequate to direct man, in his present state of guilt and depravity, to glorify and enjoy God.[1] Reflection on the state of the human mind, observation of the history of the world, and the fact that God has given a supernatural revelation, demonstrate that the light of nature is utterly insufficient to impart to man that knowledge of God which is necessary to salvation.[2]

[1] 1 Cor. i. 21. The world by wisdom knew not God. [2] Rom. i. 21. When they knew God they glorified Him not as God. Prov. xxix. 18. Where there is no vision the people perish.—Confession of Faith, Chapter I. Section 1. Larger Catechism, Question 2.

2. It has pleased God, in his gracious condescension, at sundry times, and in divers manners, to give amply authenticated revelations of his will respecting the salvation of man.[1] For the preservation and diffusion of these revelations, they have been, by special divine direction, committed to writing in successive ages,[2] and are now brought to that state of completeness and perfection in which God designed to give them.[3]

[1] Heb. i. 1. God, who at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son. [2] Exod. xvii. 14. And the Lord said unto Moses, Write this for a memorial in a book. Isa. xxx. 8. Note it in a book, that it may be for the time to come for

ever and ever. Jer. xxx. 2. Write thee all the words I have spoken to thee in a book. [3] Rev. xxii. 18, 19. If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book. And if any man shall take away from the words of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life.—Con. I. 1.

3. The writings usually called the Old and New Testaments, and these alone, are given by inspiration of God; holy men having been infallibly guided in the matter and language of them, writing as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.[1] The Holy Scriptures, in their originals, or faithfully translated, are in themselves, without interpretation, addition, or sanction, from man, a clear, perfect, and authoritative rule of faith and duty, and obligatory on men individually and socially. The genuine text of the Old Testament in Hebrew, and of the New Testament in Greek, is the supreme, infallible, and ultimate standard in all matters of religion.[2]

[1] 2 Tim. iii. 16. All scripture is given by inspiration of God. 2 Pet. i. 21. Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. [2] Isa. viii. 20. To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them. Psalm, cxix. 105. Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path, John v. 9. Search the Scriptures. 1 Thes. ii. 13. When ye received the Word of God—ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth the Word of God.—Con. I. 2, 3, 4; Cat. 3.

4. Arguments taken from miracles, prophecy, and the remarkable preservation and success of the sacred writings, and from the doctrines, precepts, manner, scope, harmony, and effects of these writings, afford rational evidence, and may produce rational persuasion of the truth of revelation;[1] but the special divine influences of the Holy Spirit are necessary to impart to the mind that discernment and persuasion of the infallible truth of the Word of God, and produce that sense of its divine authority, and submission to it, which are included in believing it to salvation.[2]

[1] 1 John v. 9. If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater. [2] 1 Cor. ii. 14. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. John xvi. 13. The Spirit of truth will guide you into all truth.—Con. I. 5; Cat. 4.

5. God has granted to every man the right of judging for himself on all subjects that come within the reach of his faculties.[1] He is entitled, without permission from any human authority, to read the Holy Scriptures,[2] to inquire into their meaning,[3] and to adopt whatever doctrines they teach.[4] In the exercise of this right, he ought to cherish an ardent love of truth,[5] profound reverence to the authority of revelation,[6] and humble dependence on the gracious illumination of the Holy Spirit,[7] to avail himself of all the assistance which preceding inquiries may have supplied, to exert to the utmost extent all the powers of his mind, to guard against the influence of the passions,[8] and ever to remember that he is accountable to God for the opinions he embraces, as well as for the words he utters, and the actions he performs.[9]

[1] Rom. xiv. 5. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. [2] Acts xvii. 11. And searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so. [3] 1 Cor. x. 15. I speak as to wise men, judge ye what I say. [4] Rom. xiv. 10. But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ. [5] 2 Thess. ii. 10. Because they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved. [6] 2 Cor. x. 5. And bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. [7] 1 Cor. ii. 12. Now we have received the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. [8] James i. 21. Therefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word which is able to save your souls. [9] John iii. 18. He that believeth not, is condemned already. 1 Cor. iv. 5. Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts; and then shall every man have praise of God.—Con. I. 8, 10.

6. The communication of divine revelation does not supersede the exercise of human reason.[1] Man is bound to employ his rational faculties in examining the evidences of the divine authority of the Scriptures, ascertaining the meaning of the language of Scripture, comparing one part with another, deducing inferences from Scripture statements, and trying what he thinks, speaks, reads, hears, sees, or practises, by this infallible test.[2] Reason cannot predetermine what God shall, or shall not reveal, may not mould into its own conceptions the contents of revelation,

but ought implicitly to receive, on the veracity and authority of the divine testimony, the doctrines which God has actually revealed, how much soever they exceed the comprehension of the mind.[3] The testimony of God being greater than that of men, it is highly reasonable and dutiful to receive, and highly unreasonable and criminal to reject, any thing he has revealed. The doctrines of revelation are clearly discerned by reason, to be contained in the Scriptures, and are mysterious, not from any thing unintelligible in the language, but from the intrinsic sublimity of the subjects themselves, and from the necessary limits, as well as present obscurity, of the human mind. The spiritual discernment of divine truth, which maketh wise to salvation, is a result, not of the unassisted effort of human reason, but of the special illumination of the Holy Spirit.[4]

[1] 1 Pet. iii. 15. And be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you. [2] Acts xvii. 2. Paul reasoned out of the Scriptures. 1 Cor. x. 15. I speak as to wise men, judge ye what I say. [3] Mat. xiii. 11. Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God. [4] Col. ii. 2. To the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ. Eph. iii. 3. By revelation he made known unto me the mystery,—whereby when ye read ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ. 1 Tim. iii. 9. Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.—Con. I. 5.

Believing and confessing the above first principles on the subject of a revelation from God, we condemn the following errors:—That the light of nature is sufficient to direct man to perfection and happiness, and that men framing their lives according to it shall be saved;—that the Old and New Testaments are not the inspired word of God;—that the books known by the name of the Apocrypha, are of equal authority with the Holy Scriptures;—that it is proper to read them as a part of the public worship of God;—that there are authoritative oral traditions;—that the Scriptures are not to be put into the hands of the common people:—that the Scriptures are not fully and infallibly inspired of God, and that some parts of them are more inspired than others;—that reason is the standard of religious truth, and that there are no incomprehensible mysteries in the Holy Scriptures;—that the Scriptures are to be believed only in

accordance with the interpretation of the church;—that the traditions and writings of the ancients, and decrees of the church, are to be admitted in whole or in part, as supreme authority in religious controversy;—that an internal light in the human mind in any respect supersedes the necessity or use of the Divine Word, and sets aside the visible institutions of the church of Christ;—that there are still new revelations of the Spirit besides the Word of God;—and that the Old Testament is not of equal authority with the New, and is of comparatively little use to the Christian church.

In the errors testified against, under this chapter, we have in view—the Infidel who denies revealed religion—Romanists who claim the authoritative interpretation of the Scriptures, have sanctioned Apocryphal books, and maintain the authority of oral traditions—Episcopalians who, though they do not admit the inspiration of the Apocrypha, retain it along with the Holy Scriptures, and ordain that it be read in their churches—Socinians who deny the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures, and ridicule the idea that there are mysteries in the Bible—the Friends, or Quakers, who give to Christ alone the title of the Word of God, and refuse it to the Scriptures, although they profess highly to esteem them, in subordination to the Spirit; and who have set aside the visible institutions of Baptism and the Lord's Supper—and visionaries who pretend to new and authoritative revelations of the Spirit. Although no denomination have avowed that the Old Testament is not of equal authority with the New, or is of comparatively little use in the Christian church, yet in conversation, and in books, on certain branches of controversy, the Old Testament is much overlooked and slighted. Without distinguishing whether a passage belongs to the moral, ceremonial, or judicial law, it is often thought sufficient to reject it, when adduced in proof of a doctrine or principle, that it is taken from the Old Testament. This, however, is inconsistent with a full belief in the New Testament, for it explicitly and largely recognizes the divine authority of the Old.

CHAPTER II.

OF GOD, THE DIVINE PURPOSES, AND WORKS.

1. THERE is, distinct from the universe, an uncreated, infinite, eternal, self-existent, independent, and immutable Being; the creator, preserver, and governor of all things, the true and living God.[1] God is a most pure spirit,[2] invisible, almighty, omniscient, omnipresent, most wise, most holy, most free, most just, most gracious and merciful.[3] He is in and of himself all-sufficient, having all goodness, glory, and blessedness in himself, not standing in need of any of his creatures, not deriving any essential glory from them, but manifesting his glory by them, unto them, and upon them. His ultimate end in all things is his own glory, in the exercise and manifestation of the perfections of his nature. It is unworthy of God, as it is inconsistent with the whole tenor of Scripture, to represent his ultimate end as terminating in his creatures.

[1] 1 Tim. ii. 5. There is one God. Heb. xi. 6. He that cometh unto God must believe that he is. Job. xi. 7. Canst thou by searching find out God? Psal. xc. 2. From everlasting to everlasting thou art God. Rom. xi. 36. Of him, and through him, and to him are all things. Exod. iii. 14. I AM THAT I AM. Psal. cxlvii. 5. Great is our Lord and of great power; his understanding is infinite. Psal. cxxxix. 7. Whether shall I flee from thy presence? Mal. iii. 6. I change not. Rev. iv. 11. Thou hast created all things. Heb. i. 3. Upholding all things. Psal. ciii. 19. His kingdom ruleth over all. Jer. x. 10. The true God, the living God. [2] John iv. 24. God is a Spirit. [3] 1 Tim. i. 17. The King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God. Rev. iv. 8. Holy, holy, holy. Eph. i. 11. Who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7. The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, and transgression, and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty. Job. xxii. 2. Can a man be profitable unto God? Prov. xvi. 4. The Lord hath made all things for himself. Rom. xi. 36. For of him, and through him, and to him are all things: to whom be glory for ever.—Con. II. 1, 2; Cat. 7.

2. The invisible and eternal Godhead is numerically ONE, a strict and proper unity.

Deut. vi. 4. The Lord our God is one Lord. James ii. 19. Thou believest there is one God. 1 Cor. viii. 6. To us there is but one God.—Con. II. 1.

3. The one true and living God subsists in three distinct and equal divine persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; distinguished by necessary personal relations, but the same in substance, and equal in all divine glory.

Mat. xxviii. 19. Baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. 2 Cor. xiii. 14. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. 1 John v. 7. For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one.—Con. II. 3; Cat. 9, 10, 11.

4. According to his own most free and wise counsel, and for his glory, God has, from eternity, ordained all the events of time, and unchangeably determined the final statesof all his creatures.[1] He has established such a connection between means and ends, as not to supersede nor destroy the agency of secondary causes; so that he is not the author of sin, and offers no violence to the will of his moral creatures.[2]

[1] Acts xv. 18. Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world. Eph. i. 11. Who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. Rom. xi. 33. O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God, how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! [2] James i. 13. Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God. Acts ii. 23. Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain.—Con. III. 1; Cat. 12.

5. It pleased the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, for the manifestation of the divine glory, to create, or make out of nothing, the world and all things in it; thus imparting a finite existence to the various orders of creatures, adapting their natures to the place and purpose assigned them among the Divine works.

Gen. i. 1. In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. Heb. xi. 3. Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God. John i. 3. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. Job. xxvi. 13. By his Spirit he hath garnished the heavens. Psal. civ. 24. O Lord, how manifold are thy works, in wisdom thou hast made them all! 1 Cor. xv. 38. God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body.—Con. IV. 1; Cat. 15.

6. As the last and finishing part of creation in this world, God made man, consisting of a material body formed of the earth, and organized on principles of astonishing wisdom, and of a soul, distinct from the body, immaterial, rational, and immortal, endowed with noble faculties, capable of knowing, fearing, loving, and serving God.[1] The greatest glory of man consisted in being made after the image of God, in knowledge, rectitude, and holiness.[2] He was placed in a state of moral subjection and responsibility to God.[3]

[1] Gen. i. 27. So God created man in his own image; ii. 7. God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. [2] Job xxxv. 11. Who teacheth us more than the beasts of the earth, and maketh us wiser than the fowls of heaven. [3] 1 Cor. ix. 21. Being not without law to God.—Con. IV. 2; Cat. 17.

7. The Creator of the ends of the earth has a necessary propriety in all things, and sovereignty over them;[1] upholds them in being by the word of his power,[2] and by a secret, wise, and holy providence, directs, restrains, overrules, and disposes all his creatures, all their changes and actions, and all the events of time, to his own glory.[3] He employs a variety of subordinate agencies, which are under his absolute control; and his providence extends to the actions of moral agents, without violating their nature or abetting their sin.[4]

[1] 1 Chron. xxix. 11. All that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and thou art exalted as head over all. [2] Heb. i. 3. Upholding all things by the word of His power. [3] Mat. x. 29. Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing, and one of them shall not fall to the ground without your Father? [4] Prov. xxi. 1. The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord; as the rivers of water he turneth it whithersoever he

will. James i. 13. Neither tempteth He any man. Psal. lxxvi. 10. Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee, the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain.—Con. V. 1; Cat. 18.

8. The providence of God maintains not only the natural order of the material world, but a moral dominion in the kingdom of men. The material and moral worlds are so balanced in the hands of the Creator and Ruler, that the one is made subservient to the other, the natural to the moral. Both having the same Governor, and the scheme of both being determined in the same everlasting purposes, the physical or material world is placed in subordination to the moral, and thus subordinated in the hands of God, it is affected by the state of the moral world; the whole being so ordered as to manifest a moral character in the divine government.[1] The sin of man is, accordingly, often punished by the operation of the natural laws by which the world is governed, without changing these laws;[2] and it is impious, as well as unreasonable, to make the immutability of the laws of nature an objection to the obligation and efficacy of prayer and religious duty.[3]

[1] Psal. lviii. 11. Verily he is a God that judgeth in the earth. [2] Psal. cvii. 33. He turneth rivers into a wilderness, and the water springs into dry ground; a fruitful land into barrenness for the the wickedness of them that dwell therein. Hos. ii. 21, 22. I will hear saith the Lord, I will hear the heavens; and they shall hear the earth; and the earth shall hear the corn, and the wine, and the oil; and they shall hear Jezreel. [3] Zech. x. 1. Ask ye of the Lord rain in the time of the latter rain; so the Lord shall make bright clouds, and give them showers of rain.—Con. V. 1.

Believing these doctrines of the Holy Scriptures, we condemn;—the folly of the atheist, who says there is no God, maintains that the world is eternal or an effect of chance, and is governed by fate, and that man has no immaterial and immortal soul which survives the dissolution of the body;—the pernicious heresy of those who hold that the names of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, are merely official names of one person, and of those who maintain that the Father alone is supreme God, and that the doctrine of the Trinity is an impossibility and contradiction;—the arrogance of those who deny the decrees of God, and

hold them incompatible with the moral character of God and liberty of man ;—as well as the impiety of those who deny that the providence of God is particular, that man's sin has no influence on the course of events, and who refuse the efficacy of prayer as inconsistent with the established laws by which the world is governed, and ascribe events to chance, or fate, or fixed laws, so as to exclude the moral character of the providential administration.

The distinction of persons in the Godhead does not arise out of the system of redemption, but is brought into clear light by it. And the sentiments of the Sabellian, Arian, Socinian, and Unitarian, must be testified against as subverting the fundamental doctrines of revelation. Persons denying the doctrine of Trinity may assume the name of Arius, Socinus, or any other human leader, but they have no exclusive claim to the designation Unitarian, in so far as this term denotes belief in the divine unity. Nor does the doctrine of a distinction of persons in the Godhead involve, as is alleged, a contradiction, inasmuch as God is not held to be one and three, in the same sense; *one* referring to nature, and *three* to personality. While there is so much in finite being to confound, we should not feel offended that infinite being is unsearchable. The doctrine of Trinity is essentially connected with the peculiar doctrines of redemption, which the system of Unitarians does not embrace, being principally a system of natural religion. The doctrines of natural religion cannot be satisfactorily confirmed and illustrated without the Scriptures. In this sense, then, the doctrines of natural religion belong to revealed religion; and though they do not constitute the doctrines of redemption, yet they are always supposed to be understood and acknowledged in the scheme of salvation. The exclusion of the peculiar doctrines of redemption, and the reducing of them to a system of natural religion, are entirely subversive of the designs of revelation, and incompatible with its language and spirit. The whole system must be regarded as one of masked infidelity, which, as it has renounced the peculiar doctrines of Christianity, has no claim to its name.

CHAPTER III.

OF THE LAW OF GOD—COVENANT OF WORKS—MAN'S TRANSGRESSION—HIS PRESENT STATE.

1. God is the moral Governor of all intelligent creatures[1] —he has placed them under law to himself—and holds them universally responsible. The scriptures make known to us two orders of moral creatures, angels and men.[2]

[1] Psal. ciii. 19. His kingdom ruleth over all. Rom. xiv. 12. Every one of us shall give account of himself to God. Acts xvii. 31. He will judge the world in righteousness. [2] Bless the Lord, ye his angels that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his Word. Bless ye the Lord, all ye his hosts, ye ministers of his that do his pleasure. Bless the Lord all his works in all places of his dominion.—Con. III. 3, 4; Cat. 16.

2. Angels were created pure spirits, excelling in knowledge and strength, holy and immortal. A part of them have fallen into sin and condemnation, the others are established in moral excellence and felicity.

Psal. civ. 4. Who maketh his angels spirits. Mat. xxii. 30. But are as the angels of God. Mat. xxv. 31. And all the holy angels. 1 Tim. v. 21. The elect angels. Jude 6. The angels which kept not their first estate.—Con. III. 3, 4; Cat. 19.

3. Man is a free moral agent, bound under the penalty of eternal death, to yield universal obedience to the law of God, and accountable to him for all his thoughts, words, and actions.[1] The rule which God at first revealed to man, and inscribed on his heart, was the moral law, afterwards promulgated and summarily comprehended in the ten commandments.[2]

[1] 1 Cor. ix. 21. Being not without law to God. Rom. vi. 23. The wages of sin is death. Rom. ii. 15. Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness. Psal. cxix. 96. Thy commandment is exceeding broad. [2] Mat. xxii. 37. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.—Con. IV. 2; Cat. 17.

4. God created man male and female; and, having designed that mankind should exist by descent from Adam and Eve, he thus connected the whole human family by a bond of nature.[1] It pleased God to graft upon this natural relation a moral and federal connexion, by constituting Adam the representative of the human race, and entering into a covenant with him, in behalf of himself and all his natural posterity, promising life and blessedness on the condition of obedience. The obedience of man to the authority and law of God at large, was subjected to a trial, by the positive prohibition of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and enforced by a special revelation of the penalty of death in case of disobedience.[2] Reasonable creatures owe universal obedience to God as their creator and governor; and it was a fruit of sovereign goodness on the part of God to propose everlasting felicity unto man, by way of covenant, as the reward of his obedience—a reward which there was nothing in the obedience of man intrinsically to merit or claim. This constitution of things, called the *law* or *covenant* of works, manifested the condescension and favour of God, and was holy, just, and good; and viewed antecedently to the event, presented to the human family easier terms, a nearer prospect of felicity, and greater security for obedience and the attainment of happiness, than could have been afforded by distinct individual responsibility. It was a constitution of things not only in every respect beyond the reach of objection, but claiming to be readily and cordially embraced, as a display of the divine favour and condescension.

[1] Gen. i. 27. Male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, be fruitful and multiply,

and replenish the earth. [2] Gen. ii. 17. But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it, for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. Rom. v. 14. Adam—who is the figure of him that is to come. Rom. vii. 10. The commandment was ordained to life. Rom. x. 5. Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, that the man which doeth these things shall live by them. Gal. iii. 12. And the law is not of faith, but the man that doeth them shall live in them.—Con. VII. 1, 2; Cat. 20.

5. Adam, being created holy, must have conscented to the law and covenant of God. He was morally able to obey; but not being confirmed in a state of holiness, and being left to the liberty of his own will, through the temptation of Satan, he violated the condition of the covenant, by eating the forbidden fruit: and, thus throwing of all moral subjection to God, involved himself and all his natural posterity in guilt and misery.

Gen. iii. 6. She took of the fruit thereof and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat. 1 Cor. xv. 22. In Adam all die.—Con. VI. 1; Cat. 21.

6. The guilt of Adam's first transgression is, according to a righteous constitution of God, imputed to all his natural posterity; and it is as really their guilt in the account of the divine law, as if they had committed the transgression in their own persons. Adam and his posterity being, by that constitution, federally as well as naturally, one, are guilty in the sight of God; and being found so, are by a righteous and legal imputation, declared guilty of the first transgression; the act of imputation declaring, not constituting this guilt.

Rom. v. 18, 19. By the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation. By one man's disobedience many were made sinners.—Con. VI. 3; Cat. 25.

7. In consequence of the entrance of sin into the world, all mankind are born in a state of guilt, are destitute of original rectitude, are depraved and opposed to what is good, in the faculties of their souls, sin reigning even in the members of their bodies.[1] They are utterly without moral ability to serve or enjoy God, are subject to disease

and death, and liable to everlasting punishment in the world to come; and they are unable, as they are indisposed, by any effort, to restore themselves to the favour and fruition of God.[2]

[1] Eph. ii. 3. And were by nature the children of wrath. Rom. iii. 9. Jews and Gentiles are all under sin. Eph. iv. 18. Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart. [2] Rom. viii. 7, 8. The carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. Rom. vii. 5. For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sin which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. Eph. ii. 1. Dead in trespasses and sins. Rom. v. 17. By one man's offence death reigned. Rom. v. 6. For when ye were yet without without strength.—Con. VI. 3, IX. 3; Cat. 25.

Holding these humbling but obvious truths concerning man, we condemn the sentiments of those;—who deny, and impugn as unjust, the constituting of Adam to be the representative of his posterity;—who deny the imputation of the guilt of the first transgression of Adam to all mankind;—who hold the absolute innocence and moral purity of infants;—who maintain that man becomes sinful only by imitation of evil example;—and who deny that actual sin flows from depravity of nature. We also condemn the sentiments of those who hold that the penalty annexed to the disobedience of Adam, and entailed on his posterity, is only temporal death;—and of those who contend that man is still morally free to do all good, and retains moral power of himself to act faith and repentance, and to yield acceptable obedience to God.

Just views of the present moral state of man are essential to a right understanding of the gospel. The remedy is adapted, in divine love and wisdom, to the disease. If we form mistaken views of the disease, if we apprehend it to be less deep and dangerous than it is, our views of the remedy must, in like manner, be defective and mistaken.

The infidel makes the doctrine of original sin the object of his virulent opposition and profane jesting, and is joined in this by Socinians and others, whose doctrines have a nearer affinity to infidelity than to revealed truth. The

Arminian school, while admitting to a certain extent the doctrine of human depravity, rejects the representative character of Adam and the imputation of the guilt of his transgression to his posterity, and maintains the moral ability and freedom of man to save himself.

The spring of all this opposition to the truth is the pride of the human heart. The doctrine of original sin and of human depravity is humbling to man, and he will not humble himself. It should be remembered, that the language of inspiration draws an analogy, between the doctrine of our connection with Adam, and the method of our deliverance by Christ. Rom. v. 12—21. If we be ignorant of the one, we can have no proper knowledge of the other. And if we deny the one, we reject the other. The comments of enemies on these parts of the divine word are most deceitful, and are all calculated at the expense of plain Scripture language, to flatter the human heart, and to bring down the divine dispensations to the views and dispositions of man—a deeply criminal and interested party, who cannot form an impartial judgment on the ways of God.

CHAPTER IV.

OF ELECTION AND THE COVENANT OF GRACE.

1. GOD, of his sovereign good pleasure, to the praise of his glorious grace, has before the foundation of the world, chosen in Christ Jesus, and ordained a certain number of mankind to eternal salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth.[1] The rest of mankind, being left in a state of sin, are by the retributive justice of God, in terms of the divine law, appointed to the punishment of their transgressions.[2]

[1] Eph. i. 4. According as he hath chosen us in him, before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace. 2 Thess. ii. 13. God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth. [2] Rom. ix. 22, 23. What if God—willing to shew his wrath and make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction, and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory.—Con. III. 3, 4, 5; Cat. 13.

2. This election is not founded upon foreseen faith or good works;[1] —it is an election not of communities to temporal and external privileges, but of persons to spiritual and eternal salvation;[2] —it connects the use of means with the end, in a way worthy of the divine perfections, and without superseding the diligent exercise of the human faculties;[3] and it is absolute and unchangeable.[4]

[1] Rom. ix. 11. For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to

election might stand; not of works, but of him that calleth. [2] Acts xiii. 48. Ordained to eternal life. [3] Eph. ii. 10. Good works which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. 2 Pet. i. 10. Give diligence to make your calling and election sure. Psal. xxxiii. 11. The counsel of the Lord standeth. [4] 2 Tim. ii. 19. The foundation of God standeth sure. Rom. viii. 30. Whom he did predestinate them he also called, &c.—Con. III. 5, 6.

3. According to the good pleasure and everlasting counsels of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and for the manifestation of the divine glory in the salvation of sinners, it pleased the Father, from eternity, to enter into a covenant transaction with his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, promising to him great mediatorial glory, and the eternal life of the elect, upon condition of his fulfilling all righteousness as their surety.[1] To this covenant the Lord Jesus most voluntarily and graciously acceded, and, being accepted as the head and representative of the elect, was invested with mediatorial offices, and by the oath of God, constituted the surety of the everlasting covenant.[2] The Holy Spirit, one with the Father and the Son in the counsels of redemption, concurred in the federal arrangements, and is essentially connected with the execution of them.[3] In this covenant there is not only a display of the divine perfections of Godhead, but of these perfections as subsisting in the persons of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,—a mystery exhibited in its certainty and peculiar glory in the federal economy.

[1] Psal. lxxxix. 3. I have made a covenant with my chosen. Tit. i. 2. Eternal life which God that cannot lie promised before the world began. 1 Cor. xv. 22. As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. Isa. liii. 10. When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed. [2] Psal. xl. 7. Then said I, Lo, I come. Heb. vii. 22. By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testimony. [3] Isa. xlviii. 16. The Lord God and his spirit hath sent me. Isa. lix. 21. As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the Lord, my spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, &c.—Con. VII. 3; Cat. 30, 31.

4. This covenant was in respect of Christ a covenant of redemption, nothing being promised to him excepting upon a condition fully adequate to the most extensive demands of justice;[1] yet, in respect of the persons interested in it,

it is a covenant of pure and absolute grace, all its blessings being dispensed to them by promise and testament, exclusively of every consideration of merit.[2]

[1] Heb. ix. 15. He is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which were called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. [2] Gal. iii. 17. And this I say, that the covenant that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise. Rom. iii. 16. Therefore it is of faith that it might be of grace.

Believing in these blessed mysteries of revelation respecting the origin of human redemption, we condemn the following errors:—That there is no election of particular persons to eternal life;—that it is unjust in God to choose some to salvation, and leave others to punishment;—that the election mentioned in the Scriptures is of nations, and merely to external privileges;—that it is conditional;—that the doctrine of election supersedes, or in any respect lessens, the obligation to use the means of salvation;—that any of the elect shall be lost;—that Christ is not the representative of the elect;—that there was no covenant from everlasting about the salvation of sinners;—and that the righteousuess of Christ was not the only meritorious condition of the covenant.

There is not a more common and fruitful topic of opposition and redicule against the gospel, than the doctrine of divine decrees. The Bible is rejected altogether, because it contains the doctrine of election, and strong appeals are addressed to the feelings of men, on its implication of the divine character. It would not be difficult to establish this doctrine, as well as that of decrees in general, on the principle of the knowledge, wisdom, and supremacy of God. But this is unnecessary; the objection is, so far, an evidence that the doctrine is contained in the Scripture; and it were to be wished that opposition to it were confined to the enemies of revelation.

Socinian and Arminian writers enter fully into the views and spirit of the unbeliever on this subject. And all this

is done with a view to vindicate the character of God, from the imputations of injustice and severity; while at the same time, the persons spoken of cast into the shade the doctrine of the divine sovereignty, and subvert the gracious character of the gospel, by suspending the enjoyment of its benefits upon human merit.

This doctrine is sometimes a matter of great difficulty to persons of tender minds. They perceive it revealed in the Scripture, and they are filled with a fear, that they may not be personally interested in election. Such persons ought to consider, that it is not their province to know the particular secret designs of God, respecting themselves or others—that the same objections are equally applicable against the decrees of God, respecting the formation and government of the world—and that there is an inseparable connection between the end purposed, and the means leading unto it. To think, or to speak, of being saved without the means of salvation, argues ignorance of the doctrine—is a most guilty and unwarrantable presumption—and, when used as an objection against the gospel, is often the hollow pretext of a mind not feeling greatly the importance of salvation, and under deceitful aversions against the holy means by which it is enjoyed.

CHAPTER V.

OF THE MEDIATOR—HIS PERSON, SATISFACTION AND MERIT —AND HIS DOMINION.

I. PERSON, OFFICES, INCARNATION OF CHRIST.

1. The Lord Jesus Christ is the true God.[1] The Scriptures ascribe to him all the names, perfections, titles, works, and worship of supreme godhead, equally with the Father and Holy Spirit.[2]

[1] 1 John v. 10. This is the true God. [2] Col. ii. 9. In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. Phil. ii. 6. Who being in the form of God thought it not robbery to be equal with God. Isa. xl. 3. Prepare ye the way of Jehovah. Isa. ix. 6. His name shall be called the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father. Rom. ix. 5. Who is over all, God blessed for ever. Heb. i. 6. Let all the angels of God worship him. Rev. v. 11. Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.—Con. VIII. 2; Cat. 11.

2. Jesus Christ is the only begotten Son of God. This glorious personal distinction is ascribed to him—not in consequence of mediatorial office—not as become man—not as raised from the dead—not in the sense in which angels, men, or believers, are the sons of God—but on account of the necessary and ineffable relation he sustains to the person of the Father, a relation expressed in the Scriptures by the terms, "the only begotten of the Father," but infinitely transcending the comprehension of creatures.

John i. 14. We beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father. John iii. 16. He gave his only begotten Son. John xx. 31. That ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God. Gal. iv. 4. God sent forth his Son. Heb. v. 8. Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered.—Con. II. 3; Cat. 10.

3. The Lord Jesus Christ, the true God, and the only begotten of the Father, was chosen and set up, in the eternal purposes and counsel of God, to be mediator between God and men, the Prophet, Priest, and King of the Church.

Prov. viii. 22. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. 1 Pet. i. 20. Who verily was fore-ordained before the foundation of the world.—Con. VIII. 1.

4. In the fulness of the time the Son of God became man, taking into union with his divine person a true and perfect human nature, consisting of a material body and rational soul, wholly without sin.[1] This human nature, appointed for him by the Father,[2] and miraculously formed by the Holy Spirit,[3] was assumed by the personal voluntary act of the Son. He was born of the Virgin Mary, called Immanuel, and continues to be God and man in one person.[4]

[1] Gal. iv. 4. But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman. 1 John iii. 5. In him is no sin. Heb. ii. 14. Forasmuch, then, as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same. Ver. 16. He took on him the seed of Abraham. [2] Heb. x. 5. A body hast thou prepared me. [3] Luke i. 35. The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee. [4] Mat. i. 23. Immanuel. Heb. x. 12. But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God.—Con. VIII. 2; Cat. 36.

5. In his holy humanity the Lord Jesus Christ received an immeasurable unction of the Holy Spirit, by which he was extraordinarily and perfectly furnished for the work of mediation.

John iii. 34. God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him. Isa. vi. 1. The Spirit of the Lord is upon me.—Con. VIII. 3; Cat. 42.

6. The human nature of Christ retains its essential properties[1]—remains in its actings perfectly distinct from the divine nature[2]—and is constantly united with the Son of God, never having had a separate subsistence.[3] All its moral and mediatorial actings, being performed in a state of union with the Son of God, are ascribed to him per-

sonally, and derive their value and efficacy in the redemption of sinners, from the infinite dignity of his one divine person.[4]

[1] 1 Tim. iii. 16. God was manifest in the flesh. [2] Rom. ix. 5. Of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came. 1 Pet. iii. 18. Being put to death in the flesh. [3] Acts xx. 28. Feed the church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood. [4] Heb. i. 3. He by himself purged our sins. 1 John i. 7. The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.—Con. VIII. 2; Cat. 38, 39, 40.

7. In contemplating this great mystery of godliness, we are to keep in view—the truth of the supreme deity of Christ[1]—the reality of his human nature[2]—the unity of his person[3]—the continued distinctness of the two natures, although united in one person[4]—and the ascription of the properties and actings of both natures, in the work of mediation, to the one person; so that, by reason of the unity of the person, that which is proper to one nature, is sometimes in Scripture attributed to the person denominated from the other nature.[5]

[1] Rom. ix. 5. Of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. [2] Luke xxiv. 39. Behold my hands, and my feet, that it is I myself. Handle me and see, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have. [3] Eph. iv. 5. One Lord. [4] 1 Pet. iii. 18. Put to death in the flesh. [5] Acts xx. 28. The church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood. John iii. 13. The Son of man which is in heaven. 1 John iii. 16. Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us.—Con. VIII. 7; Cat. 40.

8. The offices of Prophet, Priest, and King, are distinctly and emphatically ascribed to the Lord Jesus Christ, and are comprehended in the one office of Mediator. These offices are distinguished by their particular reference to God and man, and by the relative order in which they stand to one another; but they are all inseparably executed by the one incarnate mediator for the good of the elect. Christ is a true Prophet, revealing the will of God for salvation—a true Priest, making atonement by the sacrifice of himself, interceding for his people, and blessing them—and a true King, ruling in the heart, in the church, and in the world.

Deut. xviii. 15. The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a prophet from the midst of thee. Psal. cx. 4. Thou art a priest for ever. Psal. ii. 6. Yet I have set my King upon my holy hill of Zion. Zech. vi. 13. He shall be a priest upon his throne. Rev. v. 6. A Lamb as if it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes. John xiv. 6. I am the way, and the truth, and the life.—Con. VIII. 1; Cat. 42.

II. SATISFACTION AND MERIT OF CHRIST.

1. THE determination to save sinners, results from the sovereign good pleasure of God;[1] yet, in order to the accomplishment of that purpose, the holiness and justice of God, the tenor of his law, and the ends of his moral government, rendered it absolutely necessary, that a true and proper satisfaction be made to him for all the sins of those who shall be saved.[2]

[1] Exod. xxxiii. 19. I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and I will show mercy to whom I will show mercy. [2] xxxiv. 7. That will by no means clear the guilty. Heb. ix. 22. Without shedding of blood is no remission. Heb. ii. 10. It became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.—Con. III. 5; Cat. 30.

2. Having for this end assumed a holy human nature, the Son of God was made under the law in the place of the elect[1] —he gave a perfect obedience to the precept of the law[2]— he suffered the curse of the law, the just for the unjust, enduring in his soul unutterable sufferings which no creature could inflict or sustain;[3] and obedience and suffering, conjoined in the same acts in his life, and perfected in his death, he has made reconciliation for iniquity, and brought in everlasting righteousness.[4]

[1] Gal. iv. 4. Made under the law to redeem them that were under the law. [2] Rom. v. 19. By the obedience of one shall many be made righteous. [3] 1 Pet. iii. 18. Christ hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust. Gal. iii. 13. Being made a curse for us. Luke xxii. 44. And being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground. Phil. ii. 8. And became obedient unto death, even the death, of the cross. [4] Dan. ix. 24. To make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness.—Con. VIII. 4, 5; Cat. 38, 39.

3. Jesus Christ the true and great High Priest, has offered himself to God, one perfect sacrifice of infinite value;[1] on the ground of which he intercedes with God in heaven, in the behalf of his people, and imparts to them his gracious benediction.[2] He, in his priesthood and sacrifice, is the consummation of all that was prefigured and signified by the priests and sacrifices that were under the law: these, being in themselves of no value to take away sin or purge the conscience, excepting as they pointed to Christ, are now abrogated for ever by his death.[3]

[1] Heb. iv. 14. We have a great High Priest. x. 12. But this man after he had offered one sacrifice for sins. vii. 27. He offered up himself. [2] Heb. ix. 12. By his own blood he entered in once into the holy place. [3] Heb. x. 1. The law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices, which they offered year by year continually, make the comers thereto perfect. Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me. Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.—Con. VII. 5; Cat. 44.

4. Christ Jesus has not only made atonement for sin by his sufferings, but, by his obedience, has merited for his people eternal life.[1] The tenor of the law, the scriptural account of the righteousness of Christ and of the privileges of believers, confirm the doctrine of the meritorious obedience as well as satisfactory sufferings of Christ.[2] The law has a precept as well as a penalty.[3] Jesus obeyed as well as suffered, and believers are not only pardoned the guilt of their offences, but are acccepted as righteous, and made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.[4]

[1] Rom. v. 21. Even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord. [2] Rom. x. 4, 5. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. For Moses describeth the righteousness of the law, that the man which doeth those things shall live by them. [3] Dan. ix. 24. To make reconciliation for iniquity, and bring in everlasting righteousness. Mat. iii. 15. Suffer it to be so now; for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. [4] Tit. iii. 7. That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.—Con. VIII. 5; Cat. 39.

5. From the dignity of the Son of God, the blood of Christ is necessarily of infinite intrinsic value;[1] it was, however, according to divine purpose, and according to compact between the Father and the Son, shed for the elect only.[2] They only enjoy spiritual blessings, and shall inherit eternal life, through the blood and mediation of Christ.[3]

[1] 1 Pet. i. 19. The precious blood of Christ. 1 John i. 7. The blood of Jesus Christ his Son. [2] John x. 11. The good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. Eph. v. 25. Christ who loved the Church and gave himself for it. Acts xx. 28. The church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. [3] 1 Cor. iii. 21. All things are yours, things present or things to come, all are yours and ye are Christ's. Rev. v. 9. Thou hast redeemed us to God by thy blood. 1 Tim. iv. 8. Godliness is profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come. 2 Cor. i. 20. The promises of God in him are yea, and in him amen.—Con. VIII. 5; Cat. 30, 31.

6. The preservation of the world in its present state[1]—the bestowment of temporal favours and the protracted forbearance of God[2]—the suspension and the shortening of judgments[3]—the dispensation of the gospel, and its beneficial influence on society—and much outward peace[4]—are consequences of the mediation of Christ, and of the special favour of God to the redeemed, in which men in general participate; yet the redeemed only enjoy the proper fruits of the death of Christ, and possess, by right acquired from him, the good things of the present life.[5]

[1] Psal. lxxv. 3. The earth and all the inhabitants thereof are dissolved: I bear up the pillars of it. Isa. xlv. 1. I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight, and I will give thee the treasures of darkness and hidden treasures. 4. For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect. [2] Gen. xviii. 25. Then will I spare all the place for their sakes. [3] Mat. xxiv. 22. For the elect's sake those days shall be shortened. [4] Mat. v. 13, 14. Ye are the the salt of the earth. Ye are the light of the world. [5] Isa. lxv. 8. As the new wine is found in the cluster, and one saith, Destroy it not; for a blessing is in it: so will I do for my servants' sake, that I may not destroy them all. 2 Tim. ii. 10. I endure all things for the elect's sake. Acts xviii. 9, 10. Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace. For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee; for I have much people in this city.

III.—DOMINION OF CHRIST.

1. JESUS CHRIST, whose dominion as God is over all, equally with that of the Father and Spirit, has received, for the execution of his mediatory trust, a fulness of power and authority. He undertook the care of the church from the beginning of her existence, and the government of the world, in subserviency to her interests; and he is now, in human nature, exalted to all power in heaven and in earth.

John v. 22. The Father hath committed all judgment to the Son. Isa. lxiii. 9. The angel of his presence saved them. Mat. xxviii. 18. All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.—Con. VIII. 8.

2. Jesus is King of saints, ruling in the hearts of his children by his gospel and Spirit, subduing graciously to the obedience of the faith, and preserving and furthering by his providence and grace, the kingdom of God within, which cometh not with observation.[1] He is King in Zion—being the only Head of the church, having authority in her as her supreme legislator and judge.[2] He has also a dominion over all things—over angels, principalities, and powers[3]—over all mankind[4]—over the kingdoms of the world and their rulers[5]—and over the whole residue of creation[6]—administering the vast kingdom of providence in subserviency to the display of the divine glory in the redemption of the church.

1 Rev. xv. 3. King of saints. Psal. xlv. 5. Thine arrows are sharp in the heart of the king's enemies; whereby the people fall under thee. Luke xvii. 21. The kingdom of God is within you. 2 Eph. i. 22. And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church. 3 1 Pet. iii. 22. Angels and authorities and powers being made subject to him. 4 John xvii. 2. As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. 5 Psalm lxxxii. 1. God standeth in the congregation of the mighty; he judgeth among the gods. Dan. vii. 14. And there was given him dominion and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him. 6 Psal. viii. 6. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet.—Con. VIII. 8; Cat. 45.

3. All intelligent creatures, in every possible relation, are placed in a state of subjection to the mediator, and are

bound to acknowledge and obey his revealed will, when made known to them. The mediator possesses a power, not only of universal providential government, but of unlimited moral dominion, giving him a claim to the voluntary obedience of every creature capable of yielding it. His authority is extended to all angels and men, to men as individuals, and in all the relations of life, to communities and their representatives and office-bearers, to judges, to governors, and to the whole family of the nations of the world. He only is excepted who did put all things under him.

Phil. ii. 10. That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth. Psal. ii. 10. Be wise now therefore, O ye Kings; be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish. Heb. ii. 8. Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet; for in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. 1 Cor. xv. 27. But when he saith, All things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted which did put all things under him.

Opposed to the testimony of Scripture concerning the person and office of Christ, are the doctrines of the Arian and Unitarian, who deny that supreme deity belongs to Christ, and hold him to be inferior in glory to the Father; and of the Socinians who deny that Christ existed before his incarnation, holding that he is only a person of our own order, and that he was peccable, that is, might fall into sin—all which sentiments we most pointedly condemn, as subversive of the whole scheme of revelation.

We also condemn the following errors:—That retributive justice does not belong to God, and is inconsistent with his love and mercy;—that God may pardon sin by an act of his sovereignty, without satisfaction to his justice;—that Christ died only as a martyr and example, and did not make a true and proper atonement;—that he did not suffer the wrath of God, this being inconsistent with divine mercy and justice;—that he is not a true and proper Priest, who has offered a real sacrifice to God for sin;—that he has made an atonement for all men;—that believers do not enjoy temporal blessings through the mediation of Christ.

And it is greatly opposed to the testimony of the Scrip

tures, and to the glory of the Lamb that was slain, to restrict his mediatorial power to the saints, or to the church of God. To admit any ecclesiastical or civil ruler to be vested with the title of the Head of the church, and to prescribe the doctrines of her faith, or institutions of her worship, on the one hand; and on the other, to deny that the kings of the earth are, in their official character, subject to the Messiah, and bound to recognise his revealed will, and promote the interest of his kingdom—are errors equally inconsistent with the divine word, and incompatible with the true character and welfare of the church of Christ.

In the errors which we have condemned, on the person and work of Christ, we have in view, chiefly, Arians, Unitarians, and Socinians, who deny the proper divinity of Christ, ridicule the mystery of the incarnation, and reject the truth of the atonement; thus leaving nothing in the gospel on which a guilty trembling sinner can repose his confidence. Reconciliation to God by the death of his Son is an essential and distinctive doctrine of the gospel.

On the part of those admitting the doctrine of the atonement, views are entertained of its extent and design, inconsistent with the truth. Arminians hold that a general atonement has been made for the human race, in consequence of which, they have been brought into a state in which they may be saved. The doctrine of a universal atonement has been pled by imposing appeals to the feelings, founded on the goodness, the justice, and the sincerity of God. And it has been urged chiefly from those passages in which the terms *all* and *world* occur, regarding more the sound than the sense, as elicited from the true scope of the passages. The words *all* and *world* are often taken in the sense of "all of every sort and without difference;" where to interpret them as signifying absolute universality, would involve absurdity. It is evident from the word of God that the design of the death of Christ was special. "He giveth his life for the sheep. Christ loved the church and gave himself for her." The interpretation of the words *all* and *world* as signifying every sort, when applied to those objects for which Christ died, harmonizes with the above declarations; whereas the sense of absolute universality cannot be reconciled with those passages in

which the design of the death of Christ is represented as particular; because we do not read of a redemption of the human race, and also a redemption of some out of every kindred, and people, and tongue. And we condemn the doctrines of the universal salvability of the human race, and of universal pardon, as unscriptural, and giving false views of the actual present condition of man, and subverting the doctrines of special and sovereign grace.

CHAPTER VI.

OF THE REVELATION AND DISPENSATION OF THE COVENANT OF GRACE.

1. THE covenant of grace was revealed immediately after the fall of man.[1] All revelations of this covenant have been made by the Lord Jesus Christ, the great Prophet of the church. By a voice in Eden—by his appearances in human form and otherwise to patriarchs—by extraordinary interview with Moses on Mount Sinai—by the inspiration of the prophets—by his own personal ministry—and by the inspiration of the Evangelists and Apostles, he has given successive revelations of the divine mercy and grace to men.[2] And these successive communications of the divine will, in the Patriarchal, Mosaical, and New Testament ages, have been made effectual by the Holy Spirit, to the salvation of them that believe.[3] Differing in extent and clearness, they have increased in light as they were multiplied, and now form one revelation of the covenant of grace.

[1] Gen. iii. 15. I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel. Heb. xi. 4. By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain. [2] Gen. vi. 18. With thee will I establish my covenant. Gal. iii. 17. The covenant that was confirmed before of God in Christ. Luke xxiv. 44. All things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms concerning me. Gal. iii. 8. The scripture preached before the gospel unto Abraham. [3] 1 Pet. i. 10. Of which salvation the prophets have inquired, and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you. 11. Searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ,

which was in them, did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. 12. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves but unto us, they did minister the things which are now reported unto you, by them that have preached the gospel unto you, with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. Heb. xi. 13. These all died in faith. Luke i. 72. To perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant. Acts iii. 22. Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you, of your brethren.—Con. VII. 5; VIII. 6; Cat. 34, 43.

2. The covenant of grace was made with Christ upon condition of making his soul an offering for sin, and bringing in everlasting righteousness;[1] but it has been *established*, *made*, or *dispensed*, to men, by a free unconditional promise and testament.[2] The promises are yea and amen in Christ. The blessings contained in them, being purchased, and received by him in the behalf of his people, are freely disponed by promise, and bequeathed by testament; which testament, as it was ratified by his death, he lives to execute and administer. That which was a proper covenant between God and Christ, has become, by the death of Christ, a true and proper testament of Christ to the church.[3]

[1] Isa. liii. 10. When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed. [2] Eph. ii. 12. Covenants of promise. Heb. viii. 10. This is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel—I will put my laws into their minds, and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people. Heb. viii. 6. Covenant established upon better promises. Gal. iii. 18. For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise. [3] Heb. ix. 16. For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator.—Con. VII. 4.

3. In the gospel there is an exhibition of the plan of salvation by a Redeemer, and a call, invitation, or offer, addressed to all who hear it.[1] The obligation to believe is not made void by the sinner's disinclination and spiritual inability, nor is the universality of the gospel offer inconsistent with, or contradictory to, the particular purposes of God, or limited extent of the redemption of Christ.[2] Man's inability is of a moral nature, and does not arise from external physical restraint; and the infinite merit of Christ

abundantly warrants the gospel call; the gospel offer fully authorising the acceptance and embrace of faith, without laying any obstacle whatever in the way of the sinner.[3]

[1] 1 Tim. i. 15. This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. 2 Cor. v. 20. Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. Prov. viii. 4. Unto you, O men, I call. Isa. lv. 1. Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters. Mat. xi. 29. Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden. Mark i. 15. Repent ye, and believe the gospel. Mark xvi. 15. Preach the gospel to every creature. [2] Duet. xxix. 29. The secret things belong unto the Lord our God; but those things which are revealed belong unto us. [3] John iii. 36. He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him. John vi. 37. All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.—Cat. 159, 160.

4. Sinners obtain by faith an interest in Christ, take hold of his covenant, and actually participate in its blessings.[1] The believer, having an actual interest in the constitution and dispensation of the covenant, by relation to him who engaged in it, not for himself, but in the behalf of sinners, may say, in the language of David: "The Lord hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure."[2]

[1] Isa. lv. 3. Incline your ear, and come unto me; hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David. Isa. xlii. 6. I will give thee for a covenant of the people. Isa. lvi. 6. And taketh hold of my covenant. [2] 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. He hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure.—Con. XII. 3; Cat. 32, 69.

We condemn the following errors:—That there was no revelation of the covenant of grace under the Old Testament dispensation;—that there is not a free offer of Christ in the gospel to all who hear it;—that faith and imperfect obedience are the condition of this covenant, and of man's salvation. This is the sentiment of the Arminians, who hold, that in the gospel a covenant is made, or offered to be made, with the sinner, upon the condition of faith and

obedience, and that these now take the place of that perfect obedience, which the law originally required. But to make faith a condition in this sense, is to make another covenant of works, and to overturn the doctrine of faith and grace. Rom. iv. 16. *Therefore it is of* FAITH, *that it might be by* GRACE. Eph. ii. 8. *For by grace ye are saved through* FAITH, *and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast.* We testify against these views as equally mistaken and dangerous.

CHAPTER VII.

OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

1. The Holy Spirit is a true and proper person, and not an attribute or influence of deity.[1] He is distinct from the person of the Father and of the Son, and is distinguished by a necessary personal relation. He is in scripture said to proceed from the Father, and is called the Spirit of the Son.[2] He is, equally with the Father and the Son, the Supreme God, the Creator, Preserver, and Ruler of the world.[3]

[1] 1 Cor. xii. 11. But all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit dividing to every man severally as he wills. John xiv. 16. He will give you another Comforter, even the Spirit. [2] John xv. 26. But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me. Gal. iv. 26. The Spirit of his Son. [3] Gen. i. 2. The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. Job. xxxiii. 4. The Spirit of God hath made me. Mat. xxviii. 19. Baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Isa. xxxiv. 16. His Spirit it hath gathered them.—Con. III. 3; Cat. 11.

2. The Holy Spirit, necessarily participating in the purposes and covenant of redemption, sustains an essential and glorious part in the sublime economy.[1] He formed and endowed the human nature of the Saviour, and still rests upon him in an abundant measure.[2] And it is by his special influences that the dispensation of the covenant of grace is made effectual to the salvation of sinners.[3] The blood of Christ was not more necessary to harmonize the divine attributes, than are the special influences of the divine Spirit effectually to apply redemption to the souls of men. The Holy Spirit worketh secretly, powerfully, supernaturally, and irresistibly, in the hearts of men.[4] His work upon and in the faculties of the soul, is carrried on by

means of the word; yet is in itself so distinct and so essential, that without it no evidence of truth—no power of argument—no persuasion of love or of terror—no human eloquence—no combination of the most favourable circumstances can be effectual in producing conviction, imparting illumination, or rendering the soul savingly obedient to the faith.

[1] Hag. ii. 5. According to the word that I covenanted with you when ye came out of Egypt, lo, my Spirit remaineth among you. Isa. lix. 21. As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the Lord: My Spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart from thee. [2] Luke i. 35. The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee. John i. 32. It abode upon him. Psal. xlv. 7. God thy God hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows. [3] Zech. iv. 6. Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts. [4] John xvi. 7. If I depart, I will send him unto you. And, when is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment. 1 Cor. ii. 5. My preaching was in demonstration of the Spirit and of power. Eph. i. 17. That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ may give unto you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him. The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling. 2 Cor. iii. 17. Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty.—Con. VIII. 8; X. 1, 2, 4.

3. By the Holy Spirit the revelation of grace has been made effectual for the salvation of sinners, from the earliest age of the church of God.[1] There is now a more full and clear revelation of his office and work; and the promise of the Spirit is the great promise of Christ to the church.[2] By appropriate means, and by his influences on the soul, he teaches, guides, sanctifies, and comforts the children of God; dwelling in them, the author of all good—the helper in all their infirmities—the witness of their adoption—and the earnest of their inheritance.[3]

[1] Gen. vi. 3. My spirit will not always strive with man. Acts ix. 20. Thou gavest also thy good Spirit to instruct them. [2] John vii. 39. But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive; for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified. Acts ii. 33. Having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear. Gal. iii. 14. That we might receive the promise of the Spirit. [3] John xiv. 26. He shall teach you all things. Rom. viii. 14. For as many as are led by the Spirit of

God, they are the sons of God. Rom. xv. 16. Being sanctified by the Holy Ghost. John xiv. 17. He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. Gal. v. 22. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. Rom. viii. 26. Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities. Rom. viii. 16. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God. 2 Cor. i. 22. And given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.—Con. VII. 3; XII. 1; XVIII. 2; Cat. 32, 59.

4. Persons enjoying great external advantages, and who have never savingly believed the gospel, may, by aggravated iniquity, resist the common influences of the Holy Spirit in their minds, to their awful condemnation;[1] but his special and saving influences are irresistible.[2] Believers also, by negligence and sin, grieve the Spirit of God, and quench his influence in their souls. It is their duty to watch against such criminality, and to maintain a habitual dependence on the person, office, and work of the Holy Spirit.[3]

[1] Gen. vi. 3. My Spirit will not always strive with man. Acts vii. 51. Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost. Heb. x. 29. And hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace. Mat. xii. 31. The blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. [2] 1 Thess. 1, 5. Our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Ghost. Psal. xlv. 5. Thine arrows are sharp in the heart of the king's enemies; the people fall under thee. Psal. cx. 3. Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power. [3] 1 Thess. v. 19. Quench not the Spirit. Eph. iv. 30. And grieve not the holy Spirit of God.

On this head we condemn the following errors:—That the Holy Spirit is not a distinct divine person;—that reliance on the influences of the Spirit is enthusiasm;—that man has an ability to do spiritual good without the Spirit;—that the saving influences of the Spirit may be finally resisted; that there is no irremissible sin against the Holy Ghost.

Unitarians deny the personality of the Holy Spirit, and treat with despite the doctrine of his influences. Arminians, that they may vindicate their sentiments on the liberty and power of the human will, hold that the influences of the Spirit may be resisted. It is deplorable to think how this doctrine is not only neglected, but secretly ridiculed by many who have not openly disavowed Christianity.

CHAPTER VIII.

OF THE INITIATORY BLESSINGS OF THE COVENANT OF GRACE.

1. ALL mankind are by nature children of wrath, and dead in trespasses and sins. In this state they are utterly incapable of producing that spiritual change of character, denoted in the Scriptures by the term regeneration, and without which they cannot enter into the kingdom of God.[1] The truths, arguments, calls, and motives of the gospel, may affect the rational mind, and move the natural affections; but the Holy Spirit alone can convince of sin, illuminate in the knowledge of Christ, and produce saving submission of will and of heart to the righteousness of God in the gospel.[2] This is regeneration, and is the commencement of spiritual life. The change is supernatural, spiritual, and universal. From the nature of the case, the sinner must, in the commencement of this life, be the passive subject of divine power; but he is instantaneously made alive unto God.[3]

[1] Eph. ii. 1. 3. Dead in trespasses and sins, and by nature the children of wrath. John iii. 3. Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. [2] John i. 13. Which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. James i. 18. Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth. Gal. ii. 19. I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God. [3] Rom. vi. 13. Alive from the dead.—Con. IX. 3, 4; X. 1; Cat. 67.

2. Under the influence of the Spirit, by the call of the gospel, the sinner that is born again believes in Christ Jesus to the saving of his soul;[1] not only admitting the testimony of the gospel to be truth, but receiving the word of God with all readiness, and embracing and resting on

Christ for salvation, on the ground of the gospel offer.[2] Saving faith, in its own nature, or in its immediate operation, includes the exercise of the will and affections in submitting to and embracing the Saviour.[3] This faith is not simply believing that the gospel is true—nor is it a person's believing that he is particularly elected to eternal life, or that he has an interest in Christ—but a personal taking hold of Christ, on the offer of the gospel, for salvation. It does not necessarily include a subjective assurance of a person's interest in Christ, but an objective assurance that he is able to save, and, under this persuasion, the actual embracing or appropriating of him for salvation.[4]

[1] John v. 1. Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God. Col. ii. 12. Ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God. [2] Acts xvii. 11. They received the word with all readiness of mind. John i. 12. But as many as received him to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name. [3] Isa. xxvii. 5. Or let him take hold of my strength, that he may make peace with me. Heb. vi. 18. Who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us. Heb. vii. 25. He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him. [4] John iv. 42. We believe not because of thy saying, for we have heard him ourselves and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world. Heb. xi. 13. And were persuaded of them, and embraced them.—Con. XIV. 2; Cat. 72.

3. Assurance that a person is in a state of salvation is not inseparably connected with true faith.[1] This privilege being attainable by the proper use of means, it is the Christian's duty to give all diligence to make his calling and election sure.[2] Faith is ascertained by its fruits—love, repentance, zeal, and holiness.[3] The want of assurance may arise, not from rejecting the offer of the gospel, but from a person's doubting the work of grace in his own soul.[4] Without excusing the indolence which is very frequently the cause of the want of assurance, it may be asserted that the truly pious are sometimes perplexed with doubts, when the presumptuous and enthusiastic are inflated with false confidence.[5]

[1] 2 Cor. xiii. 5. Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith. 1 John v. 13. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have

eternal life. [2] 2 Pet. i. 12. Give diligence to make your calling and election sure. [3] James ii. 18. I will show thee my faith by my works. [4] Isa. i. 10. Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness and hath no light? Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God. Heb. x. 35. Cast not away, therefore, your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward. [5] Luke xviii. 14. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.—Con. XVIII. Cat. 80, 81.

4. All believers are vitally united to the Lord Jesus Christ, by the Holy Spirit and by faith.[1] In consequence of this real though mysterious union, they have not only a representative, but a vital *oneness* with the Saviour—participate in the blessings of his death—receive divine grace from him as their living Head—have communion with him in grace and glory—and have fellowship with one another as members of the same body.[2]

[1] 2 Cor. v. 17. If any man be in Christ Jesus, he is a new creature. John xv. 5. I am the vine, ye are the branches. Eph. v. 30. For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. 1 Cor. vi. 17. He that is joined to the Lord, is one spirit. [2] 2 Cor. v. 14. We thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead. Col. ii. 12. Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith. Eph. ii. 6. And hath raised us up together, and made us sit to together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Gal. iii. 28. Ye are all one in Christ Jesus. Rom. xii. 5. So we being many are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.—Con. XXV. 1; XXVI. 1; Cat. 70.

5. Believers in Christ Jesus are justified.[1] In justification they obtain the full remission of all their iniquities, the acceptance of their persons as righteous with God, and a title to eternal life. The righteousness of Christ, his active obedience and voluntary sufferings, or his obedience unto the death, is the only meritorious ground of this privilege.[2] Justification is the act of God imputing the righteousness of Christ to the sinner believing in him. There is a necessary and intimate connection between justification and faith.[3] The sinner is united to Christ by faith, and is thus interested in him as the Lord his righteousness.[4] Justification is altogether of grace, and in no sense founded upon good works; those following and giving evidence of it.[5] From the first it is complete and irrevocable.[6]

[1] Rom. v. 1. Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. [2] 18. By the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. Rom. iii. 24. Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. [3] Rom. viii. 33. It is God that justifieth. Rom. v. 1. Being justified by faith. Rom. iv. 24. But for us also to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead. 26. The justifier of him that believeth in Jesus. [4] Rom. viii. 1. There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them that are in Christ. Jer. xxiii. 6. This is the name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. [5] Tit. iii. 5—7. Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour; That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. [6] Rom. viii. 33, 34. It is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth?—Con. XI., Cat. 70.

6. It is also the honourable distinction of those that are justified, to be made, by adoption, the sons of God; and to receive from him, as a gracious Father, the Spirit of adoption, instruction, protection, provision, chastisement, liberty, and other privileges of children here, and an eternal inheritance hereafter.

Gal. iv. 5. To redeem them that were under the law that we might receive the adoption of sons. 2 Cor. vi. 18. And will be a father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. Heb. xii. 7. God dealeth with you as with sons. Rom. viii. 17. And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ.—Con. XII., Cat. 74.

Believing in these truths, we condemn the following errors;—That water baptism is regeneration;—that regeneration consists simply in moral reformation;—that it depends on the free will of man;—that it is a result merely of moral arguments or persuasion;—that a mere acknowledgment of the authority of the Scriptures, or an assent to the truth of the doctrines they contain, is saving faith;—that there is no reception or appropriation of Christ in saving faith;—that an assurance of an interest in Christ is essential to faith;—that men are justified before God, by their repentance and obedience, or by their faith, regarded as a meritorious work;—that an unbeliever is justified;—that Christ did not fulfil the precept of the law as well as endure its penalty;—that justification is incomplete and uncertain till the last judgment.

CHAPTER IX.

OF THE PRIVILEGES AND DUTIES OF THE COVENANT OF GRACE.

1. It is the peculiar excellency of the constitution of the covenant of grace, that the duty of the Christian is secured as his privilege; the duty being in the covenant a matter of promise. As promised by God, it is a grace and privilege—as prescribed by him, it is a duty. Thus we find the commandment, "Make you a new heart and a new spirit;" and we have a corresponding promise, "and a new spirit will I put within you." We have the precept, "Wash you, make you clean;" and the promise, "I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean."[1] We have both connected in the words, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling: For it is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good pleasure."[2]

[1] Ezek. xviii. 31; Ezek. xxxvi. 26; Isa. i. 16. Ezek. xxxvi. 25;
[2] Phil. ii. 12, 13.

2. Inseparably connected with regeneration and faith, is repentance unto life—a gracious principle wrought in the soul by the Holy Spirit.[1] There may be convictions, alarms, and regrets, on account of the dishonour, loss, or pain connected with sin; but there is no repentance unto life, or toward God, without faith in Jesus Christ.[2] Contemplating the divine holiness, and especially the love and mercy of God manifested in the sufferings of Christ, the believing soul is led to hate sin, and to be grieved and ashamed on account of it in the sight of God; his painful convictions and alarms are succeeded by penitential sorrow, which works by love and hope in God, and by turning from sin unto God with a holy purpose of, and endeavour after new obedience.[3] The blood of Christ alone, not penitence,

is the ground of pardon.[4] Repentance is not a transitory emotion, but a habitual principle wrought in the soul, the exercise of which the Christian is called daily to cherish, in cleansing himself from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, and perfecting holiness in the fear of God.[5]

[1] Acts xi. 18. Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life. [2] Mat. xxvii. 3. Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself. [3] Jer. xxxi. 19. Surely after that I was turned I repented. Zech. xii. 10. And they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn. 2 Cor. vii. 10. For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of; but the sorrow of the world worketh death. Luke vii. 47. Her sins which are many are forgiven; for she loved much. [4] Eph. i. 7. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace. [5] Psal. li. 3. My sin is ever before me. 2 Cor. vii. 1. Having, therefore these promises, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh, and of the spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.—Con. XV.; Cat 76.

3. Although believers are delivered, by the death of Christ, from the condemning and preceptive power of the law as a covenant of works, they are still under law to God.[1] The original obligation of the law is not made void, but established by faith: and believers are indispensably bound, by superadded obligations, to yield obedience to the law as a rule of life and a standard of holiness.[2] United to Christ, they must, in the strength of his grace, study universal conformity to the law of God; this being the original glory of man, the design of the death of Christ, and required by the obligations of gratitude and love. Good works are necessary to give evidence of grace, to express gratitude, to strengthen assurance, to edify the brethren, to adorn the profession of Christianity, to silence adversaries, to prepare for the fruition of God in heaven, and promote the divine Glory.[3]

[1] Rom. vi. 4. For ye are not under the law but under grace. [2] Rom. iii. 31. Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid; yea, we establish the law. 1 Cor. ix. 21. Under the law to Christ. [3] Tit. iii. 8. These things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works: these things are good and profitable unto men.—Con. XVI. 2.

4. It is the unspeakable privilege of those who are justified, to be also sanctified.[1] Sanctification is the work of the Holy Spirit, in and by believers themselves, whereby they are renewed after the image of God, and enabled progressively to die unto sin and live unto righteousness, and advanced unto the consummation of holiness, which will be the glory and felicity of man in a future state.[2]

[1] 1 Cor. i. 3. Christ Jesus is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification. [2] 1 Pet. i. 2. Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit. 1 Thess. v. 23. And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly. Eph. iv. 22. That ye put off, concerning the former conversation, the old man, which is corrupt. And be renewed in the Spirit of your mind. And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. Rom. vi. 22. Ye have your fruit unto holiness and the end everlasting life.—Con. XIII.; Cat. 75.

5. Justification and sanctification, though inseparably connected, are distinct from one another.[1] The one has a respect to the state of the person in the reckoning of the law, the other to his nature and life. The one is perfect at once, the other progressive. The one is the same in all, the other is of different degrees. Though always to be contemplated in their connection and order, it is erroneous and dangerous to confound them with one another.[2]

[1] 1 Cor. vi. 11. Ye are sanctified, ye are justified. [2] Rom. iii. 20. By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight. Rom. viii. 1. There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. Phil. i. 6. Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.—Cat. 77.

6. However externally conformed to the letter of the law, useful to society, or amiable in the eyes of men, the works of the unregenerate may be, they cannot be pleasing and acceptable in the sight of God, nor effect any thing toward their salvation.[1] The law is nevertheless obligatory upon all, and by the omission of its requirements or violation of its prohibitions, guilt is contracted. Yet no obedience is acceptable to God which does not proceed from a

heart purified by faith, which does not accord to the spirituality of the divine law, nor is directed to the divine glory.[2].

[1] Heb. xi. 6. Without faith it is impossible to please him. Rom. viii. 8. So then, they that are in the flesh cannot please God. Hag. ii. 14. And so is every work of their hands; and that which they offer is unclean. [2] Rom. vii. 14. The law is spiritual. Mat. xxiii. 23. These ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone. xxv. 45. Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me.—Con. XVI. 7.

7. The best works of the saints in this life are defiled, and afford no claim of merit, or ground of glorying.[1] The unfeigned though imperfect obedience of God's people is, from their relation to Christ, acceptable and well-pleasing to God; and though it cannot deserve the smallest favour, it receives a gracious reward.[2] The saints are imperfect in this world. Their sins are offensive to God, peculiarly aggravated, and provoke his fatherly chastisements; which, nevertheless are blessed by the Spirit, as means of turning them from iniquity, and of making them partakers of his holiness.[3]

[1] Psal. cxix. 96. I have seen an end of all perfection; but thy commandment is exceeding broad. Luke xvii. 10. We are unprofitable servants. [2] Rom. xiv. 18. For he that in these things serveth Christ, is acceptable to God. Rom. iii. 27. Where is boasting then? It is excluded. Rom. iv. 2. For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory, but not before God. Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace but of debt. Heb. xi. 26. He had respect to the recompense of the reward. [3] Rom. vii. 23. I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind. Psal. lxxxix. 32. Then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Heb. xii. 10. That we might be partakers of his holiness.—Con. XVI. 6: XVII. 3.

8. Mournful observation and Scripture facts show that the professors of religion may fall into a hatred and contempt of it, draw back unto perdition, and perish for ever.[1] And the saints of God may fall into grievous sins, and continue for a time under their power, to the great dishonour of God, the offence of others, and prejudice of their own souls;[2] yet the divine purposes, the constitution of the everlasting covenant, efficacy of the merit and intercession

of Christ, and the abiding influences of the Holy Spirit, render it impossible that any who have been called and accepted in the Beloved should finally perish.[3] This doctrine gives no encouragement to indolence or security in the Christian life; but, as revealed in the divine word, is a most powerful incentive to the study of universal holiness, and to press, by all appointed means, toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.[4]

[1] 1 John ii. 19. They went out from us, but they were not of us. Heb. x. 38. But if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. 39. But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition. Mat. xii. 45. And the last state of that man is worse than the first. [2] Mat. xxvi. 72. And again he denied with an oath, I do not know the man. Mic. vii. 9. I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him. 2 Sam. xii. 14. By this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme. [3] 2 Tim. ii. 19. Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. Jer. xxxii. 40. I will make an everlasting covenant with them —that they shall not depart from me. Heb. x. 14. By one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. vii. 25. He is able to save them to the uttermost, that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. John xiv. 16. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever. [4] 1 Cor. xv. 58. Therefore my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

9. There is a glorious and indissoluble connection between the purposes, covenant, and privileges of salvation; for whom God did predestinate, them he also called; and who he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified: these are links of a golden chain which cannot be broken.—Rom. viii. 30.

Believing in these important doctrines, we condemn the following errors:—That the unregenerate can exercise evangelical repentance;—that repentance unto life precedes faith in Jesus Christ;—that repentance is the proper foundation of the pardon of sin;—that believers are not under the obligation of the moral law as an authoritative rule;—that the gospel of divine grace encourages inattention to holiness;—that sanctification is not the supernatural

work of the Holy Spirit;—that the human will can accomplish sanctification;—that there is perfection in holiness in this life;—that a saint of God may at any time become totally destitute of grace and finally perish;—that perseverance in religion rests wholly on our own resolution;—that the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints is inimical to holiness.

On the subjects of these two chapters there exists a great variety of error. The absolute impotency of man to effect his regeneration is denied. Instead of viewing justification as an act of God, absolving the sinner from all guilt, and adjudging him to eternal life, on the ground of the righteousness of Christ, it is suspended on the condition of faith. It has been distinguished into *first* and *secondary*, the former grounded on faith, the latter on works. It has been denied, that it comprehends the forgiveness of future sins—the active righteousness of Christ and the imputation of it to the believer have been opposed—and it has been denied that justification is final. Against these false and self-flattering views of Arminians, we are constrained to give our decided testimony.

CHAPTER X.

OF CHRISTIAN PRACTICE.

1. THE doctrine of God our Saviour is not only to be known, and believed, and professed, but obeyed and adorned.[1] The gospel of Christ displays its proper power in the visible beauties of universal holiness.[2]

[1] Rom. vi. 17. Ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Titus iii. 10. That they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things. [2] James ii. 17, 20. Even so faith, if it have not works, is dead, being alone. Rom. vi. 21. Ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.

2. The whole law of the ten commandments, the positive institutions of Christianity, and the practical precepts of Christ, his own example, and the approved examples of the saints, form the standard of Christian practice; to which those who believe in Christ are, in dependence upon the grace of God, to study universal conformity.[1] Christian practice embraces all our duties to God, to man, and to ourselves.[2] The violation of morality is inconsistent with Christianity; but mere external morality is not practical Christianity, nor evangelical holiness.[3]

[1] Rom. iii. 31. Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid; yea, we establish the law. John xv. 14. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. 1 John ii. 6. He that saith he abideth in him, ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked. Heb. vi. 12. That ye be followers of them who, through faith and patience, inherit the promises. [2] Titus ii. 12. Teaching us, that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world. Mat. xxii. 37. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and all thy mind. 38. This is the first and great commandment. 39. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt

love thy neighbour as thyself. 40. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets. [3] 1 Cor. xiii. 3. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.

3. Prayer in the closet, and the worship of God in the family, on the morning and evening of every day[1]—reading the Scriptures[2]—habitual reverence in our conversation, of the name, word, and providence of God[3]—the sanctification of the Lord's day—the celebration of the public worship of God[4]—the orderly observation, in their seasons, of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, belong to the visible practice of the Christian, as duties which he owes to God.[5]

[1] Psal. xcii. 2. To shew forth thy loving-kindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness every night. [2] Acts xvii. 11. And searched the Scriptures daily. [3] Exod. xx. 7. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain. [4] Lev. xix. 30. Ye shall keep my Sabbaths and reverence my sanctuary. [5] Acts ii. 38. Repent, and be baptised every one of you. 39. For the promise is unto you and to your children. Luke xxii. 19. This do in remembrance of me.

4. While the Christian, in dependence on the grace which is in Christ Jesus, must study to mortify his members which are on the earth, cleansing himself from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, he owes to himself watchful care over his own life[1]—strict sobriety and temperance[2]—purity in speech and conduct[3]—government of spirit[4]—dutiful attention to his civil affairs[5]—regard to his moral and Christian character, and to his privileges civil and religious[6]—and unremitting attention to the best interests of his immortal soul.[7]

[1] Col. iii. 5. Mortify, therefore, your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry. Eph. v. 29. No man ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it. [2] 2 Pet. i. 6. And to knowledge, temperance. [3] James iii. 2. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body. Mat. v. 37. But let your communication be Yea, yea; Nay, nay. [4] Prov. xxv. 28. He hath no rule over his own spirit, is like a city that is broken down and without walls. [5] Rom. xii. 11. Not slothful in business. Prov. xxvii. 23. Be thou diligent to know the state of thy flocks, and look well to thy herds. [6] 3 John 12. Demetrius hath good report of all men. Eccl. ix. 1. A good name is better than precious ointment. Acts xxii. 25. Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman? 28. But I was

free born. Gal. ii. 4. Who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus. [7] 2 Pet. iii. 14. Be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace. Mark xiii. 37. And what I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch.

5. Under the obligation of the precepts, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," and "Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them," the Christian owes unto his fellow-creatures, not only veracity in speech,[1] and integrity and equity in all his transactions,[2] but charity, courteousness, sympathy, help, protection, and other good offices.[3]

[1] Zech. viii. 16. Speak ye every man the truth to his neighbour. [2] Mark x. 19. Defraud not. [3] 1 Pet. iii. 8. Be pitiful, be courteous. Luke x. 36, 37. Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour to him that fell among the thieves? And he said, He that showed mercy. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise. Matt. v. 44. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you, that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.

6. As the precepts of Christianity extend to all the common relations of life, so its principles and spirit ought to have their influence in the discharge of the relative duties of the Christian husband and wife,[1] parent and child,[2] master and servant,[3] ruler and subject,[4] neighbour and neighbour.[5] The Christian, in these relations, ought to manifest in his practice his subjection to the law of Christ, discovering by the love and fidelity with which he attends to his duty, that true religion affords the strongest motives and best security for the discharge of the relative obligations.

[1] Col. iii. 18. Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord. 19. Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them. [2] 20. Children, obey your parents in all things; for this is well-pleasing unto the Lord. 21. Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged. [3] 22. Servants, obey in all things your masters, according to the flesh: not with eye-service, as men-pleasers, but in singleness of heart, fearing God. iv. 1. Masters give unto your servants that which is just and equal, knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven. [4] Rom. xiii. 1. Let every soul be subject to the higher powers; for there is no power

but of God: the powers that be ordained of God. 3. For rulers are not a terror to good works but to the evil. 2 Sam. xxiii. 3. The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me, He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God. [5] Rom. xiii. 10. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour. xii. 18. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. Tit. iii. 1. Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work. 2. To speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, shewing all meekness unto all men.

7. It belongs to the practice of Christians, to walk in the fellowship of the gospel,[1] by a due attendance on the private and public ordinances of religion,[2] a dutiful submission to those who are set over them in the Lord,[3] the regular observation of the decency and order of the Christian church,[4] and, in compliance with the new commandment, a faithful discharge of the stated and occasional duties of brotherly love.[5]

[1] 1 John i. 3. That ye also may have fellowship with us, and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. Phil. i. 5. For your fellowship in the gospel, from the first day until now. [2] Heb. x. 25. Not forsaking the assembling of yourselves together. [3] Heb. xiii. 17. Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls as they that must give account. 1 Tim. v. 17. Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour. Col. ii. 5. Yet I am with you in the spirit, joying and beholding your order and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ. 2 Thes. iii. 6. Withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly. [5] Eph. v. 2. Walk in love. John xiii. 35. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another. John xiii. 34. A new commandment I give unto you that ye love one another.

8. Christian practice is not confined to one branch of the divine precepts, or to some of them; but must extend unto them all, in their time, place, and due proportion. The obedience of the Christian should be universal.

Psal. cxix. 128. Therefore, I esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right. 6. Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto all thy commandments. Luke i. 6. And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. Luke xi. 42. These ought ye to have done, and not to have left the other undone. Col. iv. 12. That ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.

9. The life of the believer should adorn the doctrine of God the Saviour, by manifesting the peculiar virtues and graces of the Christian character, in the fruits of the Spirit, which are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness,—bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind. He must add to faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness: and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity.[1] While he is diligent in providing things honest in the sight of all men, he is to study to be crucified to the world; and as the Lord prospers him, to consecrate his gain to the God of the whole earth, by devoting of his substance to works of mercy, and to the support and extension of the Redeemer's kingdom.[2] He is not called to go out of the world, but should observe a conscientious, though not an affected or ostentatious, separation from it.[3] He is not prohibited necessary and lawful recreations, yet he should study a particular tenderness and circumspection of conduct; denying himself to the vanities and sinful customs of the world; abstaining from even the appearance of evil; and endeavouring to maintain a habitual heavenliness of aim and pursuit.[4]

[1] Gal. v. 22, 23. Col. iii. 12. 2 Pet. i. 5. [2] Prov. iii. 9. Honour the Lord with thy substance. [3] Rom. xii. 2. Be not conformed to this world. John xv. 19. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Phil. iv. 8. Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. 1 Thess. v. 22. Abstain from all appearance of evil. Heb. xi. 13. And confessed that they were pilgrims and strangers on the earth. Phil. iii. 20. Our conversation is in heaven.

We testify against the following practical evils, as incompatible with the purity of the gospel, and the holiness and circumspection of the Christian character:—The neglect of secret prayer, and of family worship;—the neglect of the public ordinances of religion: profane swearing in its various degrees and forms; performing, by vocal or instru-

mental music, for public entertainment, passages of the Holy Scriptures, as is done in oratorios; or acting the most solemn scenes recorded in the Bible:—Profanation of the holy Sabbath, by idleness; pleasure walking; visiting friends; convivial parties; reading newspapers; attending coffee-rooms or other reading-rooms; receiving and answering letters of civil business:—Drunkenness, tippling; gambling; playing cards and dice; private or public lotteries; horse-racing; brawling and fighting; duelling; cruelty to fellow-creatures, or to the inferior animals; resentful and implacable spirit or conduct:—Unchaste conversation; immodest apparel; promiscuous dancings; theatrical exhibitions:—Idleness; all dishonesty between man and man:—Lying, equivocation, deceit, back-biting, evil-speaking, envious and malicious conduct.

We have enumerated some of the most prevailing practical evils; but it is impossible to specify every evil, and every shade of evil. It is matter of regret, that public sentiment and the discipline of the church, do not treat sins with more impartiality; many being overlooked which are as fit objects of reprobation and censure, as others which are viewed and treated as scandalous. And though much sin, by its secresy, disguise, commonness, and through inadvertency, may evade the censures of the church, yet it is offensive in the eyes of divine purity, and is hurtful and reproachful to Christian character.

CHAPTER XI.

OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST.

1. In its most comprehensive sense, the term church includes all the elect whom Christ has redeemed with his blood, who have been, or shall be gathered into one in him.

Eph. v. 26. Christ also loved the Church, and gave himself for it. —Con. XXV. 1.

2. To understand the Holy Scriptures, it is necessary to distinguish between the visible and invisible church, because what is affirmed of the one cannot always be affirmed of the other.

John xv. 2. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away. Eph. v. 27. A glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing.—Con. XXV. 1, 2; Cat. 62, 64.

3. All true believers, savingly united to the Lord Jesus Christ, belong to the invisible church—the spouse, body, or fulness of Christ; have communion with him in grace and glory, and a real and spiritual fellowship with one another.

Rom. xii. 5. So then we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. Eph. v. 30, 32. For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. This is a great mystery; but I speak concerning Christ and the church.—Con. XXV. 1; Cat. 65.

4. The visible church stands in an external relation to Christ, in the dispensation of the covenant of grace. It comprehends all adults, professing the doctrines, observing the institutions, and obeying the precepts of Christ, together with their children.

Acts ii. 38, 39, 47. Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ—for the promise is to you and to your children—and the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved. 1 Cor. i. 2. Unto the church of God which is at Corinth.—Con. XXV. 2; Cat. 62.

5. The Lord Jesus Christ is the Living Head of every believer, and of the whole church, united to him by the Spirit and by faith. He also is the only King and Head of the visible church, having authority to prescribe the doctrines of her faith—the institutions of her worship—the principles of her fellowship, order, government, and discipline.

Eph. i. 22. And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church. v. 23. Christ is the head of the church. Isa. xxxiii. 22. The Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our king; he will save us. Rev. iii. 7. He that hath the key of David; he that openeth and no man shutteth; and shutteth and no man openeth.—Con. XXV. 6.

6. The Lawgiver in Zion has not left his church to be organised and governed by the maxims of human policy, as expediency may dictate; but has appointed a definite government to his church, distinct from, and altogether independent of, civil government.

Isa. ix. 6, 7. The government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David and upon his kingdom to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice. Psal. cxxii. 3. Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together. Tit. i. 5, 6. For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city. Heb. xiii. 17. Obey them that have the rule over you. 1 Cor. xi. 2. And keep the ordinances as I delivered them to you. 1 Cor. xiv. 33. For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.—Con. XXX. 1.

7. The Lord Jesus has committed the government of the church, in subordination to his own authority and law, into the hands of Presbyters, or Elders, chosen by the members of the church, and regularly ordained. These elders are of two kinds, the elder labouring in word and

doctrine, and the elder who only rules; and these are the ordinary and permanent rulers in the Christian church.

Heb. xiii. 17. Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls as they that must give account. 1 Tim. v. 17. Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour; especially they who labour in the word and doctrine. Acts xiv. 23. And when they had ordained [*margin*—with lifting up of hands had chosen them] elders in every church. Tit. i. 5. And ordain elders in every city.—Con. XXX. 2. Act of Assembly at Edinburgh, Aug. 27, 1647, Sess. 23. Form of church government.

8. The Christian minister, or pastor, is an ordinary officer in the church.[1] The supernatural gifts of the Spirit having ceased, it is proper that the minister be well acquainted with the original languages of the Holy Scriptures, with the principles of theology, and with the general literature and science of the times in which he lives.[2] He must give evidence of talent, soundness in the faith and piety;[3] and he must be called by the people over whom he is set, and ordained by the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.[4] It is his duty to preside in the public worship—to pray and praise with his flock—to read the Scriptures and expound them—to preach the gospel, and apply it for doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness[5]—to administer the sacraments, and church censures[6]—to pronounce publicly the apostolical benediction[7]—to catechise[8]—teach from house to house[9]—visit the sick[10]—and, along with the other elders, rule in the church.[11]

[1] Jer. iii. 15. And I will give you pastors according to my heart. [2] 1 Tim. iv. 13. Give attendance to reading. [3] 1 Tim. iii. 2. Apt to teach. 2 Tim. ii. 2. The same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also. [4] 1 Tim. iv. 14. Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. [5] 2 Tim. iv. 2. Preach the word. [6] 1 Cor. x. 16. The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? 1 Tim. v. 20. Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear. [7] Num. vi. 23. with 2 Cor. xiii. 14. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all, Amen. [8] Heb. v. 12. For when for the time, ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God. [9] Acts xx. 20. And have taught

you—from house to house. [10] James v. 14. Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church. [11] 1 Tim. v. 17. The elders that rule well.—Form of church government. *Pastors.*

9. The elders who only rule, being chosen by the people, proved and ordained by the session, are to be associated as helps with the pastor in the whole duties of government, and to unite with him in the admission or exclusion of members—in investigating scandals and adjudging censures—in visiting the sick and the poor—in the official oversight of the congregation—and judicial deliberation on the public interests of the church.

Acts xiv. 23. And when they had ordained elders in every church. Rom. xii. 8. He that ruleth with diligence. 1 Cor. xii. 28. Helps, governments. Acts xi. 30. Which also they did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul. Acts xv. 2. Apostles and elders.—Form of church government.

10. In every regularly organised church, or congregation, assembling for public worship and fellowship, it is requisite that there be at least one pastor, with a plurality of ruling elders; these form the session, are vested with the judicial charge of the congregation, and are authorised to meet in the name of Christ, for government and discipline.

Acts xiv. 23. They had ordained them elders in every church. Mat. xviii. 15, 20. If he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he shall neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as a heathen—whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven:—and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven:—For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them. Tit. i. 5. Ordain elders in every city.—Form of church government. *Congregational assemblies.*

11. Deacons are ordained, upon the choice of the congregation, and are associated with the teaching and ruling elders in distributing to the necessities of the poor, and managing other temporalities in the church.

1 Tim. iii. 8. Likewise must the deacons be grave. Phil. i. 1. To all the saints which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons. Acts vi. 2, 3. It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables—look ye out men; whom we may appoint over this business.—Form of church government. *Deacons.*

12. The New Testament exhibits several distinct worshipping assemblies, with their regular office-bearers, as one church; and thus gives authoritative sanction to the principles of representation, subordination, and union, in the government of the house of God. The rulers of several congregations may meet by their representatives in a presbytery; presbyteries, again, in like manner, in synods; and synods, in a provincial, national, or even ecumenical assembly. Each of these courts is a consistory of elders, a presbytery; and the highest a meeting of them all by representation.

Acts ii. 42. They continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. xxi. 20. Thou seest brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe. Acts xiii. 1. Now there were in the church that was at Antioch, certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen. Acts xix. 6, 7, 20. They spake with tongues, and prophesied—and all the men were about twelve—So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed. Acts xx. 17. He sent to Ephesus and called the elders of the church. 25, 28. Rev. ii. 1. 1 Cor. i. 2. Unto the church of God which is at Corinth. xiv. 34. Let your women keep silence in the churches. Acts xv. Throughout.—Form of church government. *Of classical assemblies.*

13. In the present circumstances of the church on earth, there must be distinct congregations, and distinct judicatories: yet, according to the institution of Christ, the visible church is one among all nations. This principle ought, therefore, to be recognized, and as much as possible, kept in view in administering her government.

Eph. iv. 3, 4. Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling. 1 Cor. xii. 12. For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. 1 Cor. xii. 13. For by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles; whether we be bond or free. 1 Cor. iii. 3. For ye are yet carnal; for whereas there is among you envying, and strife and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?—Form of church government. *Of the Church.*

14. It belongs unto the elders of a congregation, as necessity and edification require, upon the choice of the

people, to prove and ordain others to be associated with them in government: and it belongs unto a presbytery, upon the call of the people, to try and ordain to the holy ministry, faithful men who shall be able to teach others also.

Acts xiv. 23. And when they had ordained them elders in every church. 1 Tim. iii. 10. And let these also first be proved. v. 22. Lay hands suddenly on no man. 2 Tim. ii. 2. The same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also. 1 Tim. iv. 14. The laying on of the hands of the presbytery.—Form of church government. *Doctrine of ordination.*

15. Among the ministers of the gospel there is a perfect parity in the power with which they are invested; and among them and the elders that rule in the church there is, in respect of government, an equality of power. And this delegated power even in the highest judicatory, is not legislative nor compulsory, but ministerial, regulated by the law of Christ, and spiritual, being addressed to the conscience, and affecting only the ecclesiastical standing of the persons concerned.

Matt. xx. 25, 26. Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister. Acts xx. 28. Take heed, therefore, unto yourselves, and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God. Heb. xiii. 17. They watch for your souls, as those that must give account. 1 Thess. v. 12. Over you in the Lord.

16. All ecclesiastical courts have an intrinsic power, independently of all foreign authority, to appoint, continue, and adjourn their meetings, as they see cause, and to discuss and determine all matters within their province, and to give them full authority as ecclesiastical deeds, independently of the concurrence or sanction of the civil powers.

Acts iv. 19. Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. Gal. v. 1. Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free.—Con. XXX. 1. Act of Assembly at Edinburgh, Aug. 27, 1647, Sess. 23.

17. The church must have explicit terms of communion, to which every member gives his assent. A perfect unity

of mind about every object of thought is not to be expected in the present state. But Christians cannot co-operate for all the ends of Christian fellowship, unless they be of one mind about the great principles of religion, and the institutions and government of the church. Terms of communion should embrace nothing but divine truth, and reject no scriptural truth for which the church has faithfully contended.

Amos iii. 3. Can two walk together except they be agreed? Phil. i. 7. With one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel. Jude 3. We should earnestly contend for the faith. Rev. ii. 10. Thou hast kept the word of my patience. Acts ii. 42. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship. Phil. iii. 16. Nevertheless whereunto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing.—Con. XXV. XXVI.

18. It is the duty of every Christian to enter into the communion of the church; and in its present divided state, while he prays for the peace, and seeks the good of Jerusalem, it is his duty to inquire what department of it adheres most closely to the Scripture rule, and to join in that communion which is most pure, in which he may best promote his own edification, and prove most useful to the kingdom of Christ.

Acts xxi. 47. And the Lord added daily to the church such as should be saved. 1 Thes. v. 21. Prove all things: hold fast that which is good. Psal. cxxii. 6. Pray for the peace of Jerusalem. Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces. Because of the house of the Lord I will seek thy good. 1 Cor. xi. 2. Keep the ordinances as I delivered them to you. 34. That ye come not together to condemnation.

19. Persons giving satisfactory evidence of knowledge, soundness in the faith, repentance of sin, and obedience to the precepts and institutions of Christ, are admissible to the fellowship of the visible church. Church rulers can receive only a profession of religion, and judge of the external evidences of its truth; but persons greatly deceive themselves and others, who seek membership in the church, without having believed in Jesus to the saving of the soul.

Acts viii. 37. If thou believest with all thine heart thou mayest Gal. v. 22, 23. The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; against such there is no law. Acts xxvi. 20. And do works meet for repentance. Psal. xxiv. 3, 4. Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? and who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity. Mat. vii. 20. By their fruits ye shall know them. 2 Tim. iii. 5. Having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.

20. All true believers have spiritual fellowship with one another in Christ. Christians may have communion with one another in what is common to them in their private Christian capacity. But ecclesiastical fellowship in the ordinances and privileges of the church cannot be maintained, in purity and power, without submission also to the government and discipline of the church. It is the design of church fellowship not only to promote spiritual edification, and prepare the saints for heaven, but to exhibit a system of sound principles, and to maintain the ordinances of the gospel church as they are delivered by her Head, and faithfully to transmit the knowledge of them to posterity.

Eph. iv. 12. For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body. Col. ii. 2. Being knit together in love, to the acknowledging of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ. Phil. i. 27. Stand fast in one spirit, with one mind, striving together for the faith of the gospel. Psal. lxxviii. 5. For he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers that they should make them known to their children.

21. Jesus has instituted discipline in his church. Heresy, immorality, and neglect and contempt of the ordinances of religion are to be proceeded against by judicial censures, to vindicate the honour of Christ, preserve the purity of the church, avert the displeasure of God, as well as to promote the good of the individuals concerned.

2 Cor. x. 8. Our authority, which the Lord hath given us for edification. Tit. iii. 10. A man that is an heretic, after the first and second admonition reject. 1 Cor. v. 11. If any man that is called a brother, be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat. 2 Thes. iii. 6. Withdraw yourselves from every brother that

walketh disorderly and not after the tradition which he received of us. Rom. xvi. 17. Mark them which cause divisions contrary to the doctrines which ye have learned, and avoid them.—Con. XXX. 2, 3.

22. It is competent to Christians in their private capacity, prudently and faithfully, to reprove one another: but the administration of church censure belongs exclusively to the authorized judicatories of the church. It admits of various degrees—admonition, suspension, rebuke, and excommunication, according to the aggravations and publicity of the scandal, and the contumacy of the offender.

Rom. xv. 14. Able also to admonish one another. Mat. xviii. 17. Tell it unto the church. 2 Cor. v. 4. In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ when ye are gathered together. Tit. iii. 10. The first and second admonition. 1 Tim. v. 20. Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear. Tit. iii. 10. Reject. 1 Cor. v. 13. Therefore put away from among you that wicked person.—Con. XXX. 4.

We condemn the prevailing sentiment;—That Christ Jesus has given no intimation of his will on the subject of the government of his Church, but has left it to be modelled by human prudence according to circumstances. And we testify against;—all dominion usurped over the church of God by ecclesiastical or civil rulers;—the blasphemous supremacy of the Roman Pontiff;—the exclusive right of ordination, and of government over the ministers and church of Christ, claimed by Archbishops and Bishops;—the headship over the Church, ranked among the prerogatives of the British crown;—and the union of civil and ecclesiastical offices in the same persons, as in the case of the Lord's Spiritual, and of ministers of the gospel acting as justices of the peace. We testify against patronage, in presenting ministers to vacant congregations, whether exercised by king, by bishops, town councils, or landed proprietors; and against the practice of selling or purchasing the right of patronage, either on the part of individuals, or of the members of a congregation. We also testify against submission to these encroachments on the privileges, and liberty, and spirituality, of the church of Christ.

We also testify against the practice of persons, while laudably interesting themselves in the erection of houses of worship and formation of new congregations, taking it upon them to present a candidate, or candidates for the choice of the people;—and against the practice of permitting persons, on the mere qualification of contributing to the property, or renting seats, to exercise the privilege of choosing a minister. Although the continuance of these things be not vindicated; yet they cannot be justified upon the principle of expediency, even in the peculiar circumstances in which a congregation is erected. In all cases the *initiative*, or originating movement, should be in strict accordance with the free and spiritual constitution of the church of Christ.

We testify against the lamentable relaxation of ecclesiastical discipline which so extensively prevails among the churches—by the admission of the ignorant, immoral, or profane, into fellowship—the conniving at, or but slightly animadverting on, heretical doctrines—the administration of private censures, even in the case of flagrant and notorious offence—and the substitution of pecuniary fines for public censures.

We must also testify against preaching the gospel, or dispensing the ordinances of religion, without an orderly appointment;—and against ordaining ministers to preach, and dispense the sacraments, without powers to exercise the government and discipline of the church. And we also testify against those who hold;—that real saintship is the only condition of church fellowship;—that government or rule is vested in the whole body of a congregation:—that there is no ruling elder instituted in the church;—nor any institution of a presbytery, or court of review;—and that the government of the church is a matter of inferior importance, about which Christians are not bound particularly to inquire, or concern themselves;—that church fellowship may be extended to all professing saints, whether or not they are objects of judicial oversight;—and that occasional church fellowship may be allowed to those who cannot be received into stated communion, or held with those churches from which there is just ground of maintaining a separation.

On the subject of church fellowship we are anxious to guard against two opposite extremes. As it is not the province of man to search the heart, we account it both unwarrantable and impracticable to make actual saintship the ground of admission to the communion of the church. The visible church, although one in profession, is mixed in respect of real character, being a net in which good and bad are caught—a floor containing corn and chaff. On the other hand, as the special privileges of the church belong to the children of God only, it is the solemn duty of ecclesiastical rulers to guard with the utmost vigilance against the intrusion of unworthy persons. It is dishonouring to the Saviour, it tends to defeat one principal design for which the church has been erected in the world; and it is exceedingly dangerous to the souls of men, when, either through negligence, or with the view of extending a church, the solemn privileges of the house of God are dispensed to those who are manifestly destitute of Christian character. It is therefore absolutely unlawful for church rulers to admit persons to the enjoyment of sealing ordinances, until they shall have obtained satisfaction by careful examination and inquiry, that they possess a correct knowledge of the doctrines of salvation by Christ, and of the principles of religion generally—that they are sound in the faith—and that in their deportment they are not only free from any charge of known immorality, but that they actually take on the yoke of Christ, by observing all his ordinances, in private, in the family, and in the congregation. Nor do we admit into the fellowship of the church, upon a general profession of what is alleged to be essential to salvation; the distinction between essentials and circumstantials, as it is usual to speak, it is impossible to draw; and though it were possible, it would be presumptuous to attempt it, in connexion with making any part of the revealed will of Christ indifferent in the Christian profession and practice. The distinction supposed is undefined and arbitrary, and does not apply to the Christian's duty. The doctrines, institutions, and precepts of the gospel, form a connected whole, reflecting the glory of the Saviour, conducing to the real interests of the church; and they are committed to her fidelity, to be preserved inviolate, exhibited, and

transmitted, according to the measure of her attainment.

On this subject we must also testify against the practice of dispensing baptism to the children of parents who habitually neglect the Lord's Supper. The censures of the church are often made a matter of mere formality, and by being administered in comparative privacy, do not give that testimony against sin, nor that vindication of the purity of the Christian church, nor that evidence to the church of the penitence of the offending, nor produce that salutary fear upon the minds of others, which should be contemplated in the censures of the house of God.

We cannot approve of the practice of admitting to the communion of the Lord's Supper, persons not professing the same faith, nor submitting to the government of the church. Catholic communion may, by an appearance of Christian charity, commend itself to the feelings; but it violates one design of the Supper, the joint profession of the name of Christ, the partakers of one bread being one body. Even the interests of practical holiness must be marred, when communicants are not followed with faithful inspection. Spiritual profit is to be expected in observing the ordinance, with a due regard to all its ends. And it is to be borne in mind, that individual edification is not exclusively contemplated in the ordinance. The celebration of the Supper is church communion, and a public profession of the name and cause of the Saviour.

CHAPTER XII.

OF CHRISTIAN WORSHIP.

1. THE true God is the only object of religious worship. Now made known in the glorious gospel, he is to be worshipped, through a mediator, according to the prescriptions of his revealed will, and by the help of the Holy Spirit.

Mat. iv. 10: Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. John iv. 24. God is a spirit, and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth. Mat. xv. 9. But in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines, the commandments of men. Eph. ii. 18. For through Him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.—Con XXI.; Cat. 109.

2. It is the duty of every Christian to cherish habitually in his heart the fear of God,[1] and to devote at least a part of every morning and evening, to secret prayer.[2] Reading the Scriptures,[3] meditation on the word and providence of God,[4] praise, self-examination, self-dedication,[5] and fasting and thanksgiving occasionally,[6] are exercises required of the private Christian, necessarily and intimately connected with the existence and growth of personal piety.

[1] Prov. xxiii. 17. Be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day long. [2] Mat. vi. 6. But when thou prayest enter into thy closet. 1 Thess. v. 17. Pray without ceasing. Psal. cxix. 147. I prevented the dawning of the morning and cried. 148. Mine eyes prevent the night watches that I might meditate on thy word. Psal. xcii. 2. To show forth thy loving-kindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness every night. [3] John v. 39. Search the Scriptures. [4] Psal. i. 2. And in his law doth he meditate day and night. Psal. cxliii. 5. I meditate on all thy works. [5] Psal. cxvi. 16. O Lord, truly I am thy servant. [6] Mat. vi. 17, 18. When thou fastest, appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret, and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly. Psal. xcii. 1. It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto thy name, O Most High.—Directory for Family Worship, Sect. I.

3. It is the duty of every Christian family to worship God in the exercises of praise, reading the Scriptures, and prayer, in the morning and evening of every day. And the heads of families should enjoin and require the regular attendance of all the members.

Jer. xxxi. 1. At the same time, saith the Lord, will I be the God of all the families of Israel. Psal. cxviii. 15. The voice of rejoicing and salvation is in the tabernacles of the righteous. Deut. vi. 6. And shall talk of them when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. Jer. x. 25. Pour out thy fury—upon the families that call not on thy name. Gen. xviii. 19. He will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord. Exod. xx. 10. Thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant. Lev. xxiii. 3. It is the Sabbath of the Lord in all your dwellings. Psal. lxxviii. 5. Which he commanded our fathers that they should make them known to their children. Eph. vi. 4. Bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Zech. xii. 12. And the land shall mourn, every family apart. Deut. xiv. 26. Thou shalt rejoice, thou and thy household.—Directory for Family Worship.

4. The members of the church ought to meet together in private, for devotional and instructive exercises, to strengthen the faith, promote the comfort, and quicken the piety and zeal of one another.

Mal. iii. 16. Then they that feared the Lord, spake often one to another. Acts xvi. 13. And on the Sabbath we went out of the city by a river-side, where prayer was wont to be made. Col. iii. 16. Admonishing one another in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs. Heb. x. 25. Not forsaking the assembling of yourselves together—but exhorting one another.—Con. XXVI. 2.

5. The first day of the week, the Christian Sabbath, is to be sanctified, by resting from all civil labour and recreation, and by being exclusively devoted to the public and private exercises of religion, excepting in works of necessity and mercy. The Sabbath is a whole day from midnight to midnight, and is of universal moral obligation. It should be sanctified in families. On that day children and servants are to be carefully instructed in the principles and duties of religion, in the family, as well as enjoined attendance upon the public institutions.

Exod. xx. 8, 10. Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy—in it thou shalt not do any work. Isa. lviii. 13. If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable, &c. Mat. xii. 12. Wherefore, it is lawful to do well on the Sabbath days. Acts xx. 7. Upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them. John xx. 19. Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week,—came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.—Directory for Family Worship, Sect. VIII.

6. It is the duty of Christians to wait upon the ordinances of public worship, celebrated according to the will of God.[1] Persons who have been regularly sent, and these only, are authorized publicly to read and expound the Scriptures, and preach the gospel for the instruction and edification of the hearers.[2] Sermons ought to be delivered from recollection, after careful study, and in dependance upon the Holy Spirit.[3] And the preached gospel is to be attended with diligence, preparation, and prayer, received with faith and love, remembered and obeyed.

[1] Lev. xix. 30. Ye shall keep my Sabbaths and reverence my sanctuary. [2] Rom. x. 15. And how shall they preach except they be sent? Acts x. 33. Now, therefore, we are all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God. [3] Acts xx. 7. Paul preached to them, and continued his *speech* until midnight. Tit. ii. 1. But *speak* thou the things that become sound doctrine.—Con. XXI. 5; Cat 158—160.

7. Praises are to be offered to God in worship, with the understanding and the Spirit, in a grave and melodious manner, the whole congregation joining in this part of worship. The Book of Psalms having been given by inspiration for this purpose, and being richly fitted to direct the individual and the church, in every variety of condition, is to be appropriated to this service.

Psal. xcv. 1. O come let us sing to the Lord; let us make a joyful noise to the Rock of our salvation. Eph. v. 19. Singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord. 2 Chron. xxix. 30. Sing praise unto the Lord with the words of David, and of Asaph the seer. 2 Sam. xxiii. 1. The sweet Psalmist of Israel said, the Spirit of the Lord spake by me. Eph. v. 19. Speaking to yourselves in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, (songs dedicated

by the Spirit.) Mark xiv. 26. And when they had sung an hymn. James v. 13. Is any merry, let him sing psalms.—Directory for Public Worship.

8. Prayer is to be presented to God, by the Christian minister, as the mouth of the congregation, in a solemn and reverent manner, and in faith in Christ Jesus; the whole congregation joining in the attitude of prayer, and giving close attention.[1] It ought to precede and follow the preaching of the word. It ought not to be read from a book, nor servilely repeated from memory, but presented to God after thoughtful premeditation, and in dependence on the Spirit.[2] And that all present may join, it ought always to be in a known tongue.[3]

[1] Acts ii. 42. And they continued steadfastly in prayers. 1 Chron. xvi. 36. And all the people said, Amen. Mat. vi. 7. But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do. 1 Cor. xiv. 12. Even so ye, forasmuch as ye are zealous of spiritual gifts, seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church. [2] Rom. viii. 26. The Spirit also helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. [3] 1 Cor. xiv. 14. For, if I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful. 15. What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, I will pray with the understanding (with meaning) also. 16. Else, when thou shalt bless with the spirit, how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned say, Amen, at thy giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest?—Con. XXI. 34; Cat. 178—196.

9. It pertains to the office of the Christian minister, immediately before dismissing the public assembly, solemnly to pronounce the apostolical benediction; during which the congregation should stand, and with reverence and faith wait on the blessing from the Lord.

Num. vi. 23—27. Speak unto Aaron and unto his sons, saying, On this wise ye shall bless the children of Israel—and I will bless them. Deut. x. 8. Separated to bless in his name. 2 Cor. xiii. 14. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen.—Form of church government. Pastors.

10. The ordinance of Baptism belongs to the public worship of God. It is to be dispensed by an ordained pastor, to unbaptized adults upon their profession of faith

and repentance, to their infant children, and to the infants of church members.[1] Sprinkling with water, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, is the appropriate visible sign. Baptism is a seal of the covenant of grace, signifying regeneration, union to Christ, and participation of the blessings of the covenant. It ought to be administered without any ceremony of human device. It is not essential to salvation, nor is it to be regarded as equivalent with regeneration, nor as certainly imparting regenerating grace: but it is to be celebrated in obedience to the divine command, as a public sign and discriminating badge of relation to Christ, and distinction from the world, and as a special means of grace. The preaching of the gospel, or other public instruction, and prayer, should accompany the administration of baptism; and, in ordinary cases, it ought to be celebrated in the presence of the congregation assembling for worship.[2] Baptism is not to be repeated.

[1] Matt. xxviii. 19. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Mark xvi. 16. He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved. Acts ii. 38, 41. Repent, and be baptized.—Then they that gladly received his word were baptized. Acts ii. 39. The promise is unto you and to your children. Mat. xix. 14. Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not to come unto me; for of such is the kingdom of heaven. Rom. iv. 11. And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of faith. Gal. vi. 15. In Christ Jesus neither circumcision, availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature. [2] Mat. xxviii. 19. Teach all nations, baptizing them. 1 Cor. xii. 13. We are all baptized into one body.—Con. XXVIII; Cat. 165—167.

11. Jesus Christ has instituted the Lord's Supper in commemoration of his death.[1] It is to be administered by an ordained pastor, who, having taken the simple elements of bread and wine, after the example of Christ, is to give thanks; then breaking the bread, and giving it to the members of the church, and in like manner giving the cup to all the communicants; pronouncing, at the same time, the words of institution, as Paul received and delivered them from the Lord, to shew the signification of the ordinance; and addressing appropriate exhortations, to direct the views, confirm the faith, and elevate the devotion of the communicants.[2] The elements undergo no material

change in their substance, by being set apart to the service, but are to be used as external signs, assisting and confirming faith in the body and blood of Christ, and representing participation of the benefits of the covenant of grace, bequeathed by the testament of Christ to the children and heirs of God.[3] In this ordinance God confirms to the heirs of promise their interest in Christ, while they, on the footing of the covenant of grace, surrender themselves in solemn profession and engagement to the Lord. This ordinance is a precious means of furthering the spiritual life in the soul, a visible bond of fellowship in the church, and a public confession of the name of Christ. The Lord's Supper is a standing ordinance in the Christian church. When celebrated, it is to be observed ordinarily on the Christian Sabbath, but it is not an essential part of ordinary Sabbath sanctification.[4] Special exercises of humiliation and self-examination are required to the worthy and profitable celebration of this ordinance.[5]

[1] Luke xxii. 19. This do in remembrance of me. [2] 1 Cor. xi. 23. For I have received of the Lord, that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread: And, when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood; this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For, as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come. Wherefore, whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. [3] 1 Cor. x. 16. The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? Mat. xxvi. 26, 27, 29. Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat: this is my body. And he took the cup and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it.—I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom. [4] Acts xxvi. 7. And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread. [5] 1 Cor. xi. 28. But let a man examine himself.—Con. XXIX; Cat. 168.

12. It is competent to individuals and families to appropriate time to fasting and other religious exercises. When the divine goodness is remarkably withheld or expressed, when the divine displeasure is inflicted, continued, or removed, congregations, churches, and even nations, are

called to the occasional duties of public Fasting or Thanksgiving. Such appointments, when made by lawful authority, are obligatory, and should be religiously observed. But, with the exception of the weekly Sabbath, there is no periodical holy-day in the Christian church.

Mat. vi. 17. When thou fastest anoint thy head, and wash thy face, that thou appear not unto men to fast—and thy Father which seeth in secret will reward thee openly. Joel ii. 12. Turn ye even to me with all your heart and with fasting. Neh. xi. 17. And Mattaniah was the principal to begin the thanksgiving with prayer. Psal. cxvi. 17. I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving.—Con. XXI. 7; Cat. 116.

13. The law of God, and not the dictate of conscience, is the supreme rule by which we are to be directed in offering worship. Conscience, instructed from the law of God and in submission to it, ought freely to offer to him the worship he requires, and no human being may prescribe unto it. Although the Lord Jesus Christ has purchased a glorious liberty to believers, yet, inasmuch as conscience is only a subordinate rule under law to God, none can, without manifest sin, under pretence of conscience or Christian liberty, reject any of the divine ordinances, or change or corrupt them, by mixing with them human inventions. To plead for a liberty of this kind is to plead for licentiousness.

Rom. ii. 14. These, having not the law, are a law unto themselves, their consciences also bearing witness; and their thoughts, in the mean while, accusing or else excusing. 1 Tim. i. 5. The end of the commandment is charity, out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience. 19. Holding faith and a good conscience. Gal. ii. 4. And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty, which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage. To whom we gave place by subjection, no not for an hour. Gal. v. 13. For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only, use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh. 2 Pet. ii. 19. While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption. 1 Pet. ii. 16. As free, and not using your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness, but as the servants of God. James ii. 12. So speak ye and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty.—Con. XX.

On the subject of the worship of God, we condemn the following errors;—that there is no obligation to maintain secret prayer, family worship, and private social prayer:—that persons supposed to be in a state of unregeneracy,

ought not be called to engage in the duties of prayer and praise;—that to worship God in any way that conscience may dictate, is the right of all men;—that all worship which is offered to God according to conscience is acceptable to Him: sentiments at variance with, and destructive of, the obligations of the divine law.

We also condemn the following errors;—that the Sabbath is not obligatory under the New Testament;—that it has not been changed from the seventh to the first day of the week;—that the sanctification of the Sabbath does not require a total rest from civil labour and recreations, excepting in works of necessity and mercy, and that the keeping it holy respects only, or chiefly, the time of public worship;—and we testify against the celebration of Christmas, or other festivals of the Papal or Episcopal church.

We also condemn the sentiments, and testify against the practice, of those who deny the suitableness of the Psalms of David to New Testament worship, and, on this account, introduce into their place, songs of human composition.

We testify against those who hold ;—that water-baptism is not an institution of Christ ;—that the infants of church members are not to be baptized ;—that baptism is essential to salvation ;—that it necessarily imparts regenerating grace ;—that immersion of the body is essential to baptism: —and we condemn the ceremony of crossing, and other superstitions of the church of Rome, in the celebration of this ordinance. And we testify against the prevailing practice of private baptism, and the administration of it to the children of the ignorant and scandalous.

We condemn ;—the transubstantiation of the Romish church ;—the consubstantiation of the Lutherans ;—the giving of the bread only to the laity ;—the celebration of the ordinance kneeling ;—and the promiscuous admission of persons to it, as inconsistent with the scriptural institution, design, and purity of the ordinance.

The persons and practices referred to, and testified against, under this chapter, will be readily recognized. The Roman Catholic, and Episcopalian churches—the Baptists, or more correctly, the antepedobaptists—certain abuses among Presbyterians—and a prevailing vagueness of sentiment on liberty of conscience, are severally alluded to.

CHAPTER XIII.

OF THE NATURAL RELATIONS OF LIFE, AND CIVIL MAGISTRACY.

1. CHRISTIANITY does not destroy those relations which have their foundation in the law of nature; but reveals them anew, and brings them under the regulation of Christian, as well as of clear moral principles.

1 Cor. ix. 21. Being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ. Rom. iii. 31. Yea, we establish the law.—Cat. 124—133.

2. Marriage is an ordinance of God, instituted when man was in a state of innocence, and designed, in subserviency to the divine glory, to promote the mutual help and comfort of the individuals, and to serve other obvious purposes in society. It is a solemn vow, or covenant, between one man and one woman, to live together in mutual love and fidelity. To prevent abuses, and to give due solemnity to the ordinance, the celebration of it should be committed to duly qualified office-bearers. And from the Christian principles and duties necessary to be enjoined on such occasions, it is proper that, in all ordinary cases, marriage be solemnized by a regular Christian minister. The parties must not be within the degrees of consaguinity, or affinity, prohibited intermarriage in the divine word. Marriage is inviolably binding on the parties, excepting in the case of adultery or of irremediable wilful desertion; and can be dissolved, while both parties are living, only by a regular bill of divorcement. Although marriage is common to all sorts of people, yet Christians are under obligation, in entering into this relation, to connect themselves with Christians.

Gen. ii. 18. It is not good that man should be alone. Mat. xix. 4. Have ye not read that he which made them at the beginning, made them male and female. And said, for this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and they twain shall be one flesh. Mal. ii. 14. Yet is she the wife of thy covenant. Mat. xix. 6. Wherefore they are no more twain but one flesh. Deut. xxiv. 1. When a man hath taken a wife and *married* her. xxii. 16. The damsel's father shall say unto the elders of the city, I gave my daughter to this man to wife, &c. Lev. xviii. 24. Defile not ye yourselves in any of these things, for in all these the nations are defiled which I drive out before you. Mat. xix. 3. Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause? They are no more twain but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery. 1 Cor. vii. 39. The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth: but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord. 2 Cor. vi. 14. Be not unequally yoked with unbelievers. Eph. v. 22. Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. 25. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it.—Con. XXIV; Cat. 20.

3. Christian parents are bound, not only to provide for their children, and train them up for the employments of life, and, in good morals; but to dedicate them to God, pray for them, instruct them in religion, and prepare them for membership in the Christian church. Children are bound to honour and obey their parents in the Lord.

1 Tim. v. 8. But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel. 2 Cor. xii. 14. But the parents for the children. Prov. xxii. 6. Train up a child in the way he should go. Eph. vi. 4. Bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. vi. 1. Children, obey your parents in the Lord.—Cat. 129.

4. The principles of equity and mercy, revealed in the gospel, bind Christians when related as masters and servants, and should influence them in the performance of their respective duties.

Eph. vi. 5, 9. Servants be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ.—And ye masters, do the same things unto them—knowing that your Master also is in heaven.—Cat. 126—130.

5. It is the will of God, declared in the constitution of human nature, and clearly revealed in the Scriptures, that mankind should voluntarily associate together in civil society for their mutual help, protection, and happiness, in subserviency to godliness and honesty. Mankind, thus associated, should be governed by definite laws, and the administration of these laws committed to qualified rulers. Civil government is not merely the suggestion of necessity, nor the invention of man, like the arts and sciences, but a moral ordinance of God, for the divine glory, and individual and social good.

1 Cor. xi. 14. Doth not even nature itself teach you? Rom. xiii. 2. Whosoever resisteth the power resisteth the ordinance of God. Exod. xviii. 21. Thou shalt provide out of all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating coveteousness. 22. And let them judge the people. 1 Tim. ii. 2. For kings and all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.—Con. XXIII.

6. The Scriptures reveal the will of God respecting this ordinance of the law of nature: and it is the duty of all communities enjoying these Scriptures to submit to the authority of the divine word, framing their constitution, enacting their laws, appointing their governors, and regulating their obedience, by the certain moral dictates of this infallible standard.

Deut. xvii. 15. Thou shalt in any wise set him king over thee, whom the Lord thy God shall choose. 18. And it shall be, when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book, out of that which is before the priests—the Levites. Psal. cxix. 138, 144. Thy testimonies, that thou hast commanded, are righteous and very faithful. The righteousness of thy testimonies is everlasting. Hosea viii. 3. Israel hath cast off the thing that is good. 4. They have set up kings, but not by me. Rom. xiii. 1. Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers; for there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. 2. Whosoever, therefore, resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. 3. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? Do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same. 4. For he is the minister of God to thee for good.—Cat. 120.

7. The constitution of the relation between rulers and

ruled, is voluntary and mutual. The lawful appointment of civil magistrates is by the election of the people, and the consent of those that are chosen, with certain stipulations, according to Scripture and right reason, obliging both to the duties of their respective relations. To such magistrates Christians are bound to give conscientious subjection and obedience, in their lawful commands, to pray for the divine blessing upon them in their official character, to pay them tribute, and to defend them in the lawful exercise of their authority.

Deut. i. 13. Take you wise men and understanding, and known among your tribes, and I will make them rulers over you. 2 Kings xi. 17. And Jehoiada made a covenant between the Lord and the king and the people, that they should be the Lord's people; between the king also and the people. 1 Sam. xi. 15. And all the people went to Gilgal, and there they made Saul king before the Lord. Rom. xiii. 5. Wherefore, ye must needs be subject not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. 1 Tim. ii. 1, 2. That prayers be made for kings, and for all that are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. Rom. xiii. 7. Render therefore to all their dues; tribute to whom tribute is due. Tit. iii. 1. Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work.—Con. XXIII. 1; Cat. 127.

8. Nations are placed in a state of moral subjection to the Lord Jesus Christ, the Prince of the kings of the earth: and they are under obligation to acknowledge his mediatorial authority, and submit to his sceptre; framing their laws, appointing their rulers, and regulating their obedience, in agreeableness to the moral principles of the gospel, and in subserviency to the interests of the kingdom of Christ.

Heb. ii. 8. Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all things in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. Psal. ii. 10. Be wise now, therefore, O ye kings; be instructed, ye judges of the earth. 12. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Dan. vii. 14. There was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him. 27. And all dominions shall serve and obey him. Psal. lxxii. 11. Yea, all kings shall fall down before him; all nations shall serve him. Rev. i. 5. The Prince of the kings of the earth. Isa. xlix. 23. And kings shall be thy nursing fathers. Rev. xxi. 24. And the nations of them that are saved, shall walk in the light of it; and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it.

9. The Christian civil ruler cannot lawfully be vested with a power in and over the church, as she possesses an intrinsic and independent power from the Lord Jesus, and is not placed in subjection to any other. He may not, by his authority, call or adjourn her meetings—he may not interfere with her proceedings, when these do not injure the public peace—he may not prescribe to her a confession of faith, or forms of worship—he may not enforce the profession of religion by the sword—nor assume any manner of power or authority in the church of Christ. But it is his duty to see that the violation of the moral law—in open contempt of the being of God—in gross and public idolatry —in open blasphemy of the name of God—or in open profanation of the Sabbath—as well as by injustice, licentiousness, and violence, be duly restrained, as scandalizing to religion and the church of God, as hurtful to the peace and good order of society, and as provoking the displeasure and rebukes of the Almighty against the nation. He also ought to remove external impediments to the progress of Christianity—to protect the church in the enjoyment of her liberties, from the abuse and contempt of the profane and malignant—and make regulations for the external support and welfare of the church of Christ—but he must not assume authority, nor presume to legislate, in her internal concerns. In order to all this, the civil ruler must personally profess and exemplify Christianity, and officially give his power and his strength to the Prince of the kings of the earth. In certain states of the church and of the world, it may be difficult to point out the manner and extent, in which he may be, lawfully and constitutionally, authorized to exercise his power for the visible interests of religion. Yet this principle is not, on this account, to be rejected. The Scriptures enjoin that kings shall kiss the Son; and they prophetically exhibit a time when, without any improper blending of civil and ecclesiastical authority, each shall, in its own sphere, promote, and both, in a friendly manner, co-operate in advancing the glory of God and the interest of the kingdom of Christ, and the happiness of mankind.

Mat. xxiii. 10. One is your Master, even Christ. Mat. xvi. 19. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven. Eph

v. 23, 24. Christ is the head of the church. The church is subject to Christ. 2 Chron. xxvi. 18. It appertaineth not unto thee, Uzziah, to burn incense unto the Lord. Rom. xiii. 4. For he beareth not the sword in vain; for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. 2 Chron. xiv. 2. And Asa did that which was good and right. 3. He took away the altars of the strange gods, and the high places, and brake down their images. 1 Kings xv. 12, 25. And he took away the Sodomites out of the land, and removed all the idols which his father had made. Exod. xx. 10. Nor thy stranger that is within thy gates. Isa. lx. 10. Kings shall minister unto thee. 12. For the kingdom and nation that will not serve thee shall perish. 2 Chron. xxix. 2. And he did right in the sight of the Lord. 4. And he brought in the priests and the Levites and gathered them together. 15. And they gathered their brethren and sanctified themselves, and came, according to the commandment of the king, by the words of the Lord, to cleanse the house of the Lord. Dan. vii. 22. And the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom. Psal. ii. 12. Kiss the Son. Rev. xi. 15. The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and his Christ.

10. When Christians do not enjoy a constitution of civil society, founded on the basis of scriptural morality, and recognizing the interest of true religion, it is still their duty from a conscientious regard to the ordinance of God, as much as in them lies, to promote all the scriptural ends of civil government, by peaceable deportment, and by the support of whatever is moral and praise-worthy, when they are permitted to do so, without being required to acknowledge the lawfulness of authority constituted on immoral principles. In nations not illuminated with the light of the word of God, civil authority should be recognized when it does not violate the law of nature. In these nations the design of God by the institution of magistracy, as a moral ordinance, for the divine glory and human good, is not fully accomplished, nor can the chief purpose for which it has been placed under the feet of the Redeemer be secured. The introduction, and application of scriptural light should, therefore, be an object of earnest desire, and even of conscientious and prudent aim and endeavour. In parts of the world enjoying revelation, when a people in framing their civil constitutions and appointing their magistrates, overlook, reject, or relinquish the Scriptures as the supreme standard, enact laws inimical to the kingdom of Christ, and favour the interests of antichrist, the constitutions and

authorities, becoming thus immoral and antichristian, cannot innocently be recognized. In this case, the Christian, having entered his protest, and continuing to testify against authority so constituted and administered, still regarding the ordinance of God as it is delivered in the Scriptures, will conscientiously perform things moral and just, and promote the peace and good order of society. To imposts, even of an oppressive nature, if not exacted expressly for an immoral purpose, nor required as a pledge of subjection to authority, Christians may submit, for wrath's sake. But they cannot swear allegiance to, nor recognize as the moral ordinance of God for good, authority that is immoral and antichristian.

1 Pet. ii. 12. Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles. 13. Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake. 16. As free, and not using your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness. Rom. ii. 14. For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these having not the law, are a law unto themselves. Jer. xxix. 4. Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, unto all that are carried away captives. 5. Build ye houses and dwell in them. 6. Take ye wives, and beget sons and daughters. 7. And seek the peace of the city, whither I have caused you to be carried away captive; for in the peace thereof, ye shall have peace. Acts iv. 19. Whether it be right in the sight of God, to hearken unto you, more than unto God, judge ye. Rev. xvii. 14. These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings; and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful. Hab. i. 12. O Lord, thou hast ordained them for judgment: and O mighty God, thou hast established them for correction. Neh. ix. 37. And it yieldeth much increase unto the kings whom thou hast set over us, because of our sins: also they have dominion over our bodies, and over our cattle, at their pleasure, and we are in great distress. Mat. vi. 10. Thy kingdom come. Isa. i. 26. And I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counsellors as at the beginning; afterwards thou shalt be called, The city of righteousness, The faithful city. Num. xxiii. 9. Lo, the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations. Rev. xi. 3. And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth.

11. Christians living in peace, and, in their private capacity, furthering the ends of civil government and good order, while they do not incorporate with the national society, and are submitting to certain disabilities and

privations on this account, are nevertheless entitled to protection in their lives, property, and liberty, having contributed their proportion of the common taxations. Christians may live within the limits of the soil, and enjoy the protection of strangers within the gates, without being incorporated with the national society, or involved in the guilt that may attach to its constitution or administration. To compel them to do those things which are inconsistent with their declared conscientious dissent, would be cruel and unjust. In this case, it will be their duty to submit to temporal privations, rather than forego or contradict their testimony.

1 Tim. ii. 2. That we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty. Exod. xxii. 21. Thou shalt neither vex a stranger nor oppress him: for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt. Esth. iii. 8. And Haman said unto king Ahasuerus, there is a certain people scattered abroad and dispersed among the people in all the provinces of thy kingdom; and their laws are divers from all people; neither keep the king's laws; therefore it is not for the king's profit to suffer them. 9. If it please the king, let it be written that they may be destroyed. Heb. xi. 36. And others had trial of cruel mockings, and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonments. 38. (Of whom the world was not worthy) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens, and in caves of the earth. Rev. xi. 3. They shall prophesy clothed in sackcloth. 7. And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them.

We testify against the following errors:—That marriage is not an ordinance of God, nor necessary to parties living together as husband and wife:—that vows of celibacy may be entered into;—that polygamy is lawful:—that marriage is unlawful to the ministers of religion;—that a man may marry any of his wife's kindred nearer in blood than he may of his own;—or, that a woman may marry any of her husband's kindred, nearer in blood than she may of her own:—and that divorce is lawful in other cases than adultery, or irremediable desertion.

More particularly, on the subject of civil government, we testify against the following errors:—That civil government is not the moral ordinance of God;—that Christians are not bound to submit to civil authority;—that the light

of nature is sufficient to direct man to glorify God in the natural and moral relations of life;—that divine revelation is not the rule by which Christians ought to direct their civil conduct, even in nations possessing the Scriptures;—that magistracy is founded on grace;—that a government existing by the providence of God, and by the consent of the people, is, independently of its moral character or conformity to the divine law, to be fully recognised as the moral ordinance of God;—that infidel, heretical, or immoral persons may be lawful civil magistrates, in a land enjoying the Bible;—that a magistrate, as such, has no concern whatever with religion, or the kingdom of Christ:—that the repression of gross outward public acts of idolatry or blasphemy is persecution;—that a magistrate may be constituted the Head of the church;—that blasphemy and idolatry may be authoritatively and legally tolerated in a kingdom;—that allegiance may be sworn to immoral antichristian constitutions;—that prayers are to be offered up to God for the establishment of such constitutions;—that Christians are bound to effect a change in the moral state of the nations by the sword, or to attempt reformation by other than moral means; that the doctrine of magistracy does not come within the province of the pulpit, and should form no part of a testimony for the truth;—that it is lawful for civil rulers to sanction the sale or purchase of human beings as an article of traffic;—that it is unlawful, in any case, to wage war in defence of liberty or religion.

In the present day, it is, perhaps, unnecessary to say any thing on the exploded doctrine of passive obedience and non-resistance. This is a doctrine of the Romish school; and it has operated most prejudicially to the cause of Christianity, particularly in those countries where Christianity and Popery are not known to be different. The claim to indiscriminate and absolute submission, which has been set up by civil and ecclesiastical rulers, the one often supporting the other, has led many to disavow, and to reprobate Christianity altogether. And it has been attempted to support these unreasonable claims by an appeal to those passages which enjoin obedience, exhibited apart from those which describe the character of the powers and

authorities to which that obedience is due. The legitimacy of existing powers has always been assumed, rather than confirmed by an appeal to scriptural authority. The principles of Episcopacy, acknowledging the superiority of Archbishops and Bishops, their subjection to the Crown, and close incorporation with the State, natively lead to the doctrine of passive obedience, and foster the spirit of arbitrary power. These principles have, in former times, led to the oppression, and even persecution to the death of those who dared to try the claims of rulers by the infallible standard of right and wrong. Under the accusation of rebellion and treason, many of the saints have been put to death, because they would not acknowledge, nor give allegiance to unlawful powers, nor yield obedience to their unrighteous mandates. The tide of opinion ran high in this matter, and obedience was inculcated in the strongest, and most indiscriminate terms; while no care was shown to ascertain, by a scriptural test, the character of the powers for which this obedience was claimed. Recent political discussions have produced a considerable change in the public sentiment on this subject. It is matter of regret that this has arisen more from the current of political opinion, than from a direct regard to scriptural authority; many in the Christian coummunity remaining strongly averse to bring the subject to the test of scriptural principle. The exceeding broad commandment of God embraces this branch of duty as well as others; and the Christian, esteeming all the precepts of God concerning all things to be right, yields himself to the divine authority, and is not ashamed when he has a respect to all God's commandments.

In this part of our testimony, we have in view the sentiments;—That "whatever power is set up by the majority of the people, and exists by the providence of God, is to be acknowledged and obeyed for conscience sake;—and that there is no distinction, in respect of obligation, between magistrates set up by the preceptive will of God, and such as exist by his providential will only; all providential magistrates being also preceptive." The protracted argument of our fathers, on this subject, did not arise, as must appear from the history of the controversy, from strange fancies

and abstract views, on their part, but from an endeavour to abide by the entire interest of the covenanted reformation, and to give a faithful testimony against defections from it, in the state as well as in the church. Although the controversy led into abstract reasoning, we have not lost sight of the original object of their testimony on this subject—a dutiful adherence to the scriptural excellencies of the reformation, as embraced by the state as well as by the church. Recent discussions have brought this argument into greater publicity and popularity, in certain departments of the Christian church, than it obtained in former times. And, on this account, it may be less necessary to revive it, in all its bearings. While the general principle of the subjection of the nations to God and his Anointed is by many conceded and ably pled, it is also desirable that it were faithfully applied to the conduct of the nation at the Revolution, at the Union, in recent public acts tending to subvert our Protestant constitution, and to our present national character, as a means of pointing out our sin, and recalling us to the path of duty. And O! how much is it to be desired, that persons, who are of one heart and of one soul in these matters, were so united, as to give unity and effect to their testimony, prayers, and endeavours, that the Lord may heal the breaches with which our land shakes, restore us judges as at the first, and counsellors as at the beginning, and make us again a "habitation of justice and mountain of holiness."

CHAPTER XIV.

OF OATHS AND COVENANTS.

1. SWEARING is an ordinance of God, founded on the moral law, revealed in the Scripture, and not abrogated in the New Testament. By an oath, the person is brought under a distinct, and superadded obligation. When lawful in their matter and manner, and lawfully required and administered, oaths are to be sworn to the glory of God, for confirming evidence, strengthening obligation, and terminating strife. An oath is to be taken in the plain and obvious sense of the words, without equivocation or mental reservation, in the name of God, with the lifting up of the right hand. It is an act of religious worship, and is a solemn appeal to the omniscience and retributive justice of God.

Deut. vi. 13. Thou shalt fear the Lord—and shalt swear by his name. Exod. xx. 7. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain. Mat. v. 33. Thou shalt not foreswear thyself; but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths. Heb. vi. 16. An oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife. Gen. xiv. 22. I have lifted up my hand unto the Lord, the most high God. Rev. x. 5, 6. And the angel—lifted up his hand to heaven, and sware by him that liveth for ever and ever. 2 Cor. xi. 31. The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ—knoweth that I lie not. Num. v. 19. And the priest shall charge her by an oath.—Con. XXII. 1, 3, 4; Cat. 112, 113.

2. No man should be admitted to make, or to administer an oath in an official character, who does not understand its nature, and who does not appear to know and fear God. Oaths are to be sworn only on just and weighty occasions, and with due solemnity and reverence.

Exod. xx. 7. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain. Eccl. ix. 2. The good—the sinner—he that sweareth—he that feareth an oath. Exod. xxii. 9. The cause of both parties shall come before the judges. Then shall an oath of the Lord be between them both. Numb. v. 19. And the priest shall charge her by an oath. Deut. xix. 15, 17. At the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established. Then both the men between whom the controversy is, shall stand before the Lord, before the priests, and the judges which shall be in those days. Exod. xviii. 21, 22. Thou shalt provide out of all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them, and let them judge the people at all seasons.—Con. XXII. 3.

3. Mutual oaths may be sworn by rulers and people, for the glory of God, and their mutual security—rulers binding themselves to put in faithful execution the laws of God—and people binding themselves to maintain and defend righteous rulers, in the lawful exercise of their authority.

2 Kings xi. 17. And Jehoiada made a covenant—between the king also and the people. 4. And Jehoiada fetched the rulers and took an oath of them in the house of the Lord. Eccl. viii. 2. I counsel thee to keep the king's commandment, and that in regard of the oath of God, or, *but according to the word of the oath of God.* —National Cov. Sol. League.

4. It is competent to the individual Christian, and it is his duty, to dedicate himself to God, by solemn vow, or oath. In this case a vow, or oath, assumes a Christian or spiritual character, and is not merely civil, or moral. It is the taking hold of the everlasting covenant of God, and engaging in the strength of grace, to perform all the duties which it requires. No Christian may bind himself to do any thing which is forbidden in the word of God, which would hinder any commanded duty, which is not in his power, or for the performance of which there is no promise of ability.

Num. xxx. 2. If a man vow a vow unto the Lord, or swear an oath to bind his soul with a bond: he shall not break his word. Psal. lxxvi. 11. Vow, and pay unto the Lord your God. Isa. xliv. 5. One shall say, I am the Lord's. Zech. xiii. 9. They shall say, the Lord is my God. Isa. lvi. 6. Every one that taketh hold of my covenant.—Con. XXII. 7.

5. It is the duty of the Christian church, in her social capacity, occasionally, to vow to the Lord; embracing the covenant of grace, for the maintenance of truth, the observance of the ordinances of religion, and performance of all commanded duties, to confirm her unity, and maintain her stability in the Christian cause.

Exod. xix. 8. And all the people answered together and said, All that the Lord hath spoken we will do. Isa. xix. 21. Yea, they shall vow a vow unto the Lord. Jer. i. 5. Come, and let us join ourselves to the Lord, in a perpetual covenant. 2 Cor. viii. 5. And this they did not as we hoped, but first gave their ownselves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God. Heb. viii. 8, 10. I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah.—I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people.

6. Nations, being necessarily under the moral law, and having received and embraced the Christian religion, ought, in their social capacity, to enter into solemn covenant with God, for the preservation of their liberties, and for maintaining the interests of the kingdom of Christ, as the surest basis of public peace and prosperity.

Dan. vii. 14. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him. Isa. lxii. 4. Thou shalt be called Hephzibah, and thy land Beulah; for the Lord delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married. Psal. lxviii. 31. Princes shall come out of Egypt; Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God. Rev. xi. 15. The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ. Zech. ii. 11. And many nations shall be joined to the Lord in that day, and shall be my people.

7. The oaths, or covenants, of a church or nation, when lawful in their matter, and founded on the word of God, continue binding, until the design of them has been fully accomplished, and their obligation descends upon the posterity of those who have entered into them; which distinct descending obligation arises—not only, from the unchangeable obligation of moral and Christian duty—nor only from the social body remaining, virtually the same moral subject, though the individuals are changed—but from the divine will, as revealed in the Holy Scriptures. God may bring his moral subjects under obligation unto him, in whatever

way he pleases; and it is no injury, but an advantage, and honour, to have privileges thus entailed, with their corresponding obligations.

Eccl. v. 4. When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it. Better it is that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow, and not pay. Deut. xxiii. 21. When thou shalt vow a vow unto the Lord thy God, thou shalt not slack to pay it: for the Lord thy God will surely require it of thee; and it would be sin in thee. Deut. v. 2, 3. The Lord our God made a covenant with us in Horeb. The Lord made not this covenant with our fathers, but with us, even with us, who are all of us here alive this day. Deut. xxix. 14. Neither with you only do I make this covenant and this oath. But with him that standeth here with us this day before the Lord our God, and also with him that is not here with us this day. Josh. ix. 15. And Joshua made a league with them, to let them live: and the princes of the congregation sware unto them. Compared with 2 Sam. xxi. 1. It is for Saul, and for his bloody house, because he slew the Gibeonites. Jer. xi. 10. The house of Israel, and the house of Judah have broken my covenant, which I made with their fathers.

We testify against those who maintain that it is unlawful in any case to make an oath:—we condemn the unnecessarily frequent use, and gross profanation of this ordinance in the ordinary affairs of trade and commerce;—the superstitious form of swearing, by laying the hand upon, or kissing, the Gospels;—the appointment of irreligious men to offices in which they are called to administer oaths;—and all oaths of allegiance to immoral and antichristian constitutions. We must also testify against those who deny;—that religious covenanting in the Christian church is a moral duty;—that nations should embrace the interest of the kingdom of Christ, and vow allegiance to Him;—and that the scriptural oaths of the church, or of the nations that have embraced Christianity, continue obligatory on their posterity.

The Society called Friends, or Quakers, deny the lawfulness of swearing on oath in any case. In England and Ireland, an oath is administered by the person kissing, or laying his hand upon the Gospels or New Testament. This is a custom of heathen origin. It was adopted by the Romish church, and has been received from her by the church of England. The multiplication of oaths in civil

business, particularly in custom-houses, and in the department of the excise, has long been matter of deep regret to Christian observers. There is reason to fear that there is not only an unnecessary and irreverent use of this ordinance, but that thousands are involved in the guilt of perjury. But our testimony, under this head, has a special reference to the *National Covenants.*

The National Covenant of Scotland, and the Solemn League of Scotland, England and Ireland, held a conspicuous place in the memorable reformations, by which our land was distinguished. It may justly be expected that these national deeds should be brought into honourable and prominent view, in connexion with a testimony for the great cause, in behalf of which they were framed and sworn. Adherence to the grand object of these covenants, the scriptural reformation of the two great moral associations of Church and State, and to the obligation lying upon these lands, from these deeds, which were repeatedly renewed, forms a chief ground of our distinct ecclesiastical standing.

CHAPTER XV.

OF A TESTIMONY FOR TRUTH.

1. EVERY Christian should be a witness for Christ. It is his duty to make a decided and public profession of the truths of his gracious Master, to the glory of God, the gaining of disciples, and the conviction of gainsayers.

Isa. xliii. 10. Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord. John xv. 27. And ye also shall bear witness. Acts i. 8. But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. Mat. x. 32. Whosoever, therefore, shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. Rom. x. 10. With the mouth confession is made unto salvation. Heb. iv. 14. Let us hold fast our profession. 1 Cor. i. 6. The testimony of Christ was confirmed in you. 2 Cor. ix. 13. They glorify God for your professed subjection to the gospel of Christ.

2. The ministers of the Christian church, being set for the defence of the gospel, are doctrinally to state and defend the truths of the Scriptures, in particular opposition to the contrary and prevailing errors. And it is their duty, in conjunction with the helps and governments set in the church, acting in the name of Christ, and as the representatives of the church, to exhibit a public confession, or testimony, in behalf of the truths of the gospel, the ordinances of God, the institutions of Christ, and the universal interests of the kingdom of the Redeemer.

Acts xxvi. 16. I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness. Phil. i. 7. Knowing that I am set for the defence of the gospel. 2 Tim. i. 8. Be not thou, therefore, ashamed of the testimony of our Lord. Acts xv. 16. And the Apostles and elders came together, for to consider of this

matter. xvi. 4 The decrees that were ordained of the apostles and elders, which were at Jerusalem. Rev. ii. 2. Thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars. 1 Tim. iii. 15. The church of God, the pillar and ground of truth. Zech. viii. 3. Jerusalem shall be called a city of truth. Isa. lxii. 10. Go through, Go through the gates: prepare ye the way of the people; cast up, cast up the high way; gather out the stones; lift up a standard for the people.

3. This testimony should comprehend all the truths of the Bible, in so far as they have been ascertained.[1] In the discernment and profession of divine truth, the church has hitherto been only in a state of progress.[2] Her testimony should embrace all her past attainments, the truths which have been confessed by faithful martyrs, and sealed by their blood,[3] the present truth or word of Christ's patience,[4] together with a faithful exposure of prevailing errors.[5]

[1] John xvi. 13. When he, the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth. xv. 26, 27. He shall testify of me. And ye also shall bear witness. [2] Phil. iii. 16. Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing. [3] Rev. ii. 13. Thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr. [4] Rev. iii. 10. Thou hast kept the word of my patience. 2 Pet. i. 12. Though ye know them, and be established in the present truth. [5] 1 John iv. 6. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error. Phil. iii. 18. Many walk of whom I have told you often, and now tell you, even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ. Rom. xvi. 17. Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them. Tit. iii. 10. A man that is an heretic, after the first and second admonition, reject.

4. The testimony of the church, although founded upon the Holy Scriptures, is, in various particulars, distinct from them. The Scriptures are inspired, infallible, perfect, invariable, and the foundation of the church's testimony. The testimony of the Church is uninspired, imperfect, variable, and built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets; and because it must be adapted to the movements of error, and the evolution of the scheme of providence, it is progressive. And it ought to be exhibited in the form that is most eligible, and best fitted to promote the various uses of a testimony for the truth.

Rev. vi. 9. I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held. 2 Tim. i. 13. Hold fast the form of sound words. Rev. xii. 11. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony. Rev. iii. 10. Thou hast kept the word of my patience. Col. i. 10. Increasing in the knowledge of God. Heb. vi. 1. Let us go on unto perfection. Isa. viii. 20. To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.

5. The church is not at liberty to recede from a more clear and particular testimony, to one more general and indefinite. She ought not to suffer important truths, to the knowledge and profession of which she has attained, to drop from her testimony, even with the view of promoting union and enlargement; but holding fast that which is good, it should be her endeavour to go forward unto that state of comparative perfection, which there is reason to expect she shall attain, even on the earth.

1 Thes. v. 21. Prove all things: hold fast that which is good. Rev. ii. 25. But that which ye have already, hold fast till I come. Rev. xi. 7. And when they shall have finished their testimony. Isa. xxx. 26. Moreover the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be as the light of seven days. Rev. xx. 4. And judgment was given unto them—and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

Accordingly we testify against the following sentiments:—That a person acknowledging Christianity may live without making any particular profession of it;—that the Bible is the only testimony of the church;—that creeds and confessions are of no use in the church, but are unwarrantable and pernicious;—that the church has nothing to do with the faithful contendings and testimonies of the witnesses of Christ in former generations;—that testimony—bearing is inconsistent with faithfully attending to the interests of practical religion in the soul;—that it is lawful, in order to enlarge the church and extend her communion, to recede from a more particular scriptural testimony, to one more general and undefined.

The Reformed Presbyterian Church has been organized, on an adherence to the principles of the Protestant Presbyterian Covenanted Church of Scotland. These principles

have been exhibited in the Covenants, Westminster Confession, Catechisms, the Form of Presbyterial Church Government, the Directory for Worship, and in the Testimonies of the Martyrs; and we believe them to be substantially founded on the Bible. When we specify these writings, we are not pledged to defend every sentiment, or expression to be found in them. We have given a declaration of the scriptural principles to which we adhere. And while we have endeavoured to give the reason of our faith from the Holy Scriptures, we cheerfully refer to the testimonies of the Church of Scotland, in proof that these principles have been embraced by her, and of our approbation of her zeal and fidelity.

CHAPTER XVI.

OF SCRIPTURE PROPHECY, AS AFFECTING THE CHURCH'S TESTIMONY AND PRACTICE.

1. BESIDES the light which the Scripture throws upon every subject of morals and religion, and upon the grand designs of Providence, it comprehends in it a scheme of Prophecy—a prospective outline of the whole duration of time, in relation to the kingdom of Christ. It has pleased Him, who declares the end from the beginning, to give a prophetical view of the kingdom of Christ, from its commencement, to the consummation of all things. Besides what is scattered through the sacred volume at large, the Book of Daniel and the Revelation of John exhibit a regularly digested scheme of divine prediction. In the latter particularly, the scheme of prophecy, as relating to the kingdom of Christ in the last days, is carried forward through its several stages, to the end of the world; with the design of affording increasing evidence of the truth of divine revelation, light and comfort to the saints in the study of divine providence, special direction in duty, and, by strengthening the faith, hope, patience, and zeal of the saints, to give particular preparation for the events foretold. These prophecies, besides announcing future events relating to the kingdom of Christ, embody in them moral and Christian principles, to direct the faith and practice of the saints.

Isa. xlvi. 10. Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. Amos. iii. 7. Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets. 2 Pet. i. 10. We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a

light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts. Mat. xxiv. 25. Behold, I have told you before. John xiv. 29. And now I have told you before,—that when it is come to pass, ye might believe. Rev. i. 19. Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter. Rev. xiii. 10. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints. Rev. xix. 10. The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.

2. It is the duty of every Christian, and of the Christian church, to study the prophecies—comparing them with other parts of the divine word—carefully observing the movements of providence—and, in dependence upon the Holy Spirit, endeavouring to derive from them confirmation to faith, direction in prayer and duty, and patience and comfort under the most trying aspects of the divine dispensations. Rash dogmatical explanations, fanciful and illiterate interpretations, premature and sanguine expectations, and partial and political expositions, form no just objection, or ground of prejudice, against the study of the inspired predictions. The moral principles and Christian doctrines implied in them, equally with the other parts of Scripture, are profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness. And although it is not for us to know the times and the seasons with perfect chronological precision, it never having been intended that the prophecies should be perfectly understood before the events, yet so much of their meaning may be learned by the humble inquirer, as is sufficient to give him present direction in maintaining a testimony for the truth, and to inspire him with patience and hope, while waiting for the events.

Rev. i. 3. Blessed is he that readeth, and they that keep the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand. Dan. xii. 10. But the wise shall understand. 12. Blessed is he that waiteth and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days.

3. At this advanced period of the history of the world, we are sufficiently assured, by comparing the predictions with the events, that the apostacy described by Paul, in his second epistle to the Thessalonians, and in his first epistle to Timothy, is that gross corruption of Christian

doctrines and institutions, and abuse of ecclesiastical and civil power, which have so long existed in the Romish church. And there is ample evidence to prove that the same corruption is represented in the book of Daniel, and in the Revelation of John, under various striking symbols. There is no reason to surrender the position that was assumed by the faithful Waldenses, and afterwards by the the whole succession of Protestants: "That the church of Rome is the Babylon described in the book of the Revelation." These prophetical books ought to be employed, in connection with other parts of Scripture, in confirming the Protestant cause, and in giving authority to a faithful testimony against the perversions of Christian doctrine and institutions by the church of Rome. They are valuable, not merely for an ultimate confirmation of the truth of Christianity by their fulfilment in the events, but for present direction and comfort in the Christian testimony and practice, till the Lord shall consume that Wicked with the spirit of his mouth, and destroy him with the brightness of his coming.

2 Thes. ii. 3—12. 1 Tim. iv. 1—3. Dan. xi. 30—38. Rev. xii. xiii. xiv. &c. &c. Rev. xviii. 4. Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. xi. 3. They shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth. 10. These two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth.

4. We believe that a period approaches, in which the kingdom of Christ shall triumph over all opposition, and have a universal diffusion, influence, and prosperity.[1] The Romish antichrist shall be destroyed, and shall cease not only to exert a malignant influence of any kind, on the ecclesiastical and social institutions of those countries where it has prevailed, but to have an organized existence on the face of the earth.[2] The Jews shall be converted to Christianity, and added to the church.[3] The greater fulness of the Gentiles shall be brought in.[4] Mohammedan and Pagan nations shall embrace the religion of Jesus, and all mankind shall possess the knowledge of revealed truth. There is reason to believe, that the truth shall be felt in its illuminating, regenerating, and sanctifying efficacy, by the

greater number of those who profess it, Knowledge, love, holiness, and peace shall extensively prevail, under the copious effusions of the Holy Spirit. Arts, sciences, literature, and wealth shall be consecrated to the service of Christ. The social institutions of men shall be erected and administered under the influence of scriptural principle.[5] Oppression and tyranny shall terminate; wars shall cease from the earth, and the nations be united in peace. The inhabitants of the world shall be exceedingly multiplied, and pure and undefiled religion shall exert supreme dominion over the hearts and lives of men, and diffuse universal felicity. This happy period shall be of long duration. It will be succeeded by a general defection from truth and holiness, and the prevalence of irreligion and crime, which will immediately precede the second coming of the Son of man from heaven.[6]

[1] Dan. vii. 14. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion. 27. And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him. Psal. lxxii.; Isa. lx. throughout. [2] Dan. vii. 11. I beheld even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame. 26. But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end. 2 Thess. ii. 8. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and destroy with the brightness of his coming. Rev. iii. 15. The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever. xix. 20. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him.—These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. xviii. 2. Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen. [3] Rom. xi. 27. For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins. [4] Rom. xi. 15. For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead? 25. Until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. [5] Isa. ii. 4. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people; and they shall beat their swords into plough-shares, and their spears into pruning-hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. Isa. xi. 6—9. The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, &c. Zech. xiv. 9. And the Lord shall be king over all the earth: In that day shall there be one Lord, and his name one. [6] Rev. xx. 4. And they lived and

reigned with Christ a thousand years. 7, 8. And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations. 11. And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away.—Cat. 191.

Embracing these views of the nature and design of Scripture prophecy, we testify against;—those who neglect to read and study the inspired predictions, as if nothing certain or profitable could be learned from them;—those who refuse to admit the canonical authority of the book of Revelation;—those professing Christians who do not point their testimony against the errors of the Romish Antichrist. We also testify against the introduction of the corruptions of Popery into either civil or ecclesiastical constitutions; and particularly against the usurpation of a supremacy over the church by the civil magistrate—against the legal establishment, or authoritative toleration of Popery—against all contributions and alliances for its support and establishment—and against the omission of prayer for its final overthrow.

We would not be confident, or dogmatical, in the interpretation of unfulfilled prediction. At the same time, we condemn all interpretations of the prophecies of the Old Testament, which are inconsistent with the exposition given of them in the New, and all interpretations of Scripture prophecy which are inconsistent with the established doctrines of revelation. We testify against those who interpret the predictions of the future glory of the kingdom of Christ on earth, in the sense of a temporal kingdom, which Jesus Christ is to descend to earth to possess and administer along with his saints, to be raised from the dead for this end: views incompatible with the nature of the kingdom of Christ, and with the doctrines of the resurrection of the dead and eternal judgment, as set forth in the Scriptures—to say nothing of the errors and extravagance, which have usually attended these sentiments in every age, in which they have, under some temporary excitement, been revived.

CHAPTER XVII.

DEATH—FUTURE STATE—LAST JUDGMENT—ETERNITY.

1. DEATH entered into the world by sin, and passes upon all men, because all have sinned. It is, therefore, in the first view, a legal consequence of sin; and though changed in its character to the believer by Christ, its universal prevalence is a standing monument of the displeasure of God against sin, and a solemn confirmation of the doctrine of Scripture, respecting the first transgression.

Gen. iii, 19. Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return. Rom. v. 12. By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. 1 Cor. xv. 22. In Adam all die.

2. Man is possessed of an immortal spirit, which survives the dissolution of the body, and, retaining all its consciousness, returns immediately to God who gave it. The souls of men at death enter upon a state of felicity in heaven, or of misery in hell.

Eccl. xii. 7. The spirit shall return unto God who gave it. Mat. x. 28. And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul. Luke xxiii. 43. To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise. xvi. 22, 23. The beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom; the rich man also died, and was buried. And in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments.—Con. XXXII. 1.

3. The souls of the righteous are, at death, made perfect in holiness, and are immediately received into the highest heavens.[1] There they are with Christ, and behold the face of the Lord in light and glory, and wait the redemption of their bodies, which, continuing united to Christ, rest in

their graves till the resurrection.[2] And the souls of the wicked, are at their death cast into hell, where they remain in torments and utter darkness, and their bodies are kept in their graves, as in prisons, till the resurrection and judgment.[3]

[1] Heb. xii. 23. And to the spirits of just men made perfect. 2 Cor. v. 8. Willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord. [2] Phil. i. 23. Having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better. 1 Cor. xiii. 12. For now we see through a glass, darkly, but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known. Rom. viii. 23. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. Psal. xvi. 9. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth; my flesh also shall rest in hope. [3] Luke xvi. 23. And in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. Acts i. 25. That he may take part of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas by trangression fell, that he might go to his own place. Jude 6, 7. And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains, under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day. Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them, in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.—Con. XXXII. 1; Cat 86.

4. "God hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he raised him from the dead." For this end Jesus will descend from heaven, in glorious majesty. Then there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and of the unjust. Those bodies which were deposited in the graves, shall be re-united to the spirits that left them at death; and the dead being raised, shall, along with all those who shall then be alive on the earth, appear before the judgment-seat of Christ.

Acts xvii. 31. xxiv. 15. John v. 28, 29. Marvel not at this: For the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation. 1 Cor. xv. 31. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed. 2 Cor. v. 10. For we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ.—Con. XXXIII; Cat. 88.

5. The righteous shall be raised in glory, and, their bodies being fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body, they shall be separated from the wicked, honourably acquitted, and adjudged to everlasting life, on account of the meritorious righteousness of Christ, and according to their works ;—their works being evidences of their gracious state, as distinguished from the wicked, and of the degrees of their faithful services to Christ, as distinguished from one another. They shall be assessors with Christ in the judgment of men and angels. Whereas the wicked, raised to shame and everlasting contempt, shall be adjudged to everlasting punishment, on account of their guilt and depravity, and their punishment apportioned according to their wickedness.

Rev. xx. 12. And I saw the dead small and great, stand before God ; and the books were opened ; and another book was opened, which is the book of life ; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. 1 Cor. xv. 43. Raised in glory. Mat. xxv. 33. And he shall set the sheep on his right hand. 34. Then shall the King say unto them on the right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. Mat. xxv. 28. Take, therefore, the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents. 1 Cor. vi. 2. Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? 3. We shall judge angels. Mat. xxv. 31—46. Luke xii. 47. And the servant which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. Mat. xi. 24. But I say unto you, that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for you.—Con. XXXII. 2, 3 ; Cat. 89, 90.

6. The saints and holy angels shall triumphantly pass into glory, whereas the wicked shall be cast into the place of everlasting punishment. The blessedness of the righteous, and the punishment of the wicked, shall be everlasting, in the fullest extent of the meaning of the word, as expressive of duration absolutely without end.

Mat. xxv. 46. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment but the righteous into life eternal. Job xxxvi. 18. Because there is wrath, beware lest he take thee away with his stroke, then a great ransom cannot deliver thee. Rev. xiv. 11. And the smoke of their torment ascendeth for ever and ever. Rom. v. 21. That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righ-

teousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord. 1 Thess. iv. 17. And so shall we ever be with the Lord. Mark viii. 14. Where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.—Con. XXXIII. 1; Cat. 90.

Believing in these truths concerning the future and final state of man, we condemn the following errors:—That death is a debt of nature;—that at death the soul of a man sinks into a state of unconsciousness and inactivity until the resurrection;—that there is an intermediate state, or purgatory. While we condemn the sentiments held on those subjects by Socinians, Romanists, and others, we also condemn the views of those who represent the doctrine of the felicity of the saints in the state of separate spirits to be cold and shadowy, airy and fantastical—views which are inconsistent with the Scripture testimony, and with the hopes and consolations of the saints of God. While the saints look for a consummated felicity on the appearing of the great God and Saviour, they ought not to be derided when they believe that, to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord, and that to depart and to be with Christ, is far better.

We testify against the following errors:—that there shall be no resurrection of the dead;—that there shall be no resurrection of the wicked;—that the bodies which shall be raised at the resurrection shall differ in identity from those which were laid in the grave;—that the wicked shall, after suffering punishment in hell for a time, be liberated, and brought to the enjoyment of happiness;—that the punishment of the wicked shall issue in their annihilation.

CONCLUSION.

HAVING thus exhibited our testimony, and given reasons of the hope that is in us, we trust with meekness and fear, we conclude with a few general observations.

1. We have endeavoured to found our testimony for truth on the word of God. In common with other professors, we put forth the plea, that our confession is *Scriptural*, and we submit it to this test. To Scripture we make our appeal, we regard it as the first and paramount authority. Nor do we reckon ourselves justly liable to the imputation of substituting the Confession, or Testimony, of the church in the place of the word of God, and of receiving, or calling upon others to receive it with a divine faith. No, the word of God alone is the foundation of faith. The testimony of the church is only the declaration of her faith in the truths of the divine word. It is adopted as compared with, and found agreeable to, the Scriptures, and is always subject to revision. "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."

2. We trust that our testimony is strictly *Evangelical*. It embraces the great doctrines of the gospel of Christ, respecting man's sinful state and character, the necessity, reality, and efficacy of the atonement, the fulness and riches of divine grace, the influences of the Holy Spirit for regenerating and sanctifying the human character, and the essential importance of faith in the christian life. While we hold the word to be the rule of the christian profession, we equally contend for precious faith in the soul, as the grand subjective principle of this profession, in the absence of which it is impossible to please God, and the strictest profession is hypocritical and vain. We solemnly enjoin upon the members of the church, the love of God and of Christ,

as the grand impelling principle, the word of God as the directing rule, and the glory of God and the Saviour, as the ultimate end, in the profession of Christianity, and in every department of the christian life.

3. We regard our testimony as *Protestant*. In the authority ascribed to the word of God, and in the light in which it regards its doctrines and institutions, it claims this character. The reformation originated in a testimony against the errors, idolatries, and usurpations of Popery. Against these the National Covenant was particularly directed, as were the faithful contendings of the Reformers. We consider the testimony of the witnesses in western Europe, as specially pointed against the Romish Antichrist. Here is the faith and the patience of the saints. We lament that some of the evils of this system remain incorporated with our civil and ecclesiastical establishments, and involve us still in a sinful connexion with Antichrist. We testify against the legal establishment of Popery in our colonies, against unhallowed alliances with Antichristian powers, against expending the public treasury in the maintenance of Popery, and the violation of our constitution, in the admission of its votaries to the legislative councils. We have no doubt on the subject of its final overthrow, but we cannot behold with apathy its recent visible increase in Britain. The general discontinuance of the application of the divine predictions to this system, and of particular prayer to God for its removal is ominious. The aspects of the times, and the universal agitation which is shaking society to its basis, give emphasis to the divine call, "Flee out of the midst of Babylon, and deliver every man his own soul; be not cut off in her iniquity; for this is the time of the Lord's vengeance; he will render unto her a recompense." Jer. li. 6. "And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." Rev. xviii. 4.

4. Our testimony is also *Presbyterian*. A primary place is to be given to vital christianity; and it should be the first care of the christian, to be added to the Lord. But he has a social as well as an individual character, and it should be his care also, for his own sake, and for the glory

of the Saviour, to be added to the church. In the performance of this part of christian duty, the injunctions of the Holy Scriptures are to be obeyed, as well as in matters of faith, and of personal religion. The institutions, communion, and government of the church, pertain to the law of Christ, as well as the doctrines and precepts of the gospel, and may not be regarded with indifference. They conduce, under the blessing of the Spirit, to advance vital Christianity in the soul; they give visibility and influence to christian character, and they enable christians to work together, in accomplishing the great ends for which the church is erected in the world. Provision is made for this purpose in the intimations of the Redeemer's will respecting the government of his house. We have stated, above, our reasons for adopting the presbyterial regimen; and regarding it, in its grand principles, as the will of Christ, we view it on this account, as important, obligatory, and, of course, more than any system of human device, conducive to the prosperity of the church. Alas that it should so often have been regarded merely as the suggestion of human wisdom, and a device of worldly policy, to be modified as circumstances may seem to render expedient! We cannot regard in this light the kingdom of Jesus Christ. Presbyterianism we view as adapted to the nature and circumstances of man—as agreeable to the principles upon which society conducts its affairs, more or less important—as providing for the order, purity, unity, extension and perpetuity of the church—as happily removed from the despotism of episcopacy and the anarchy of congregationalism. By such considerations as these Presbyterian government is recommended. But we are constrained to recognize it on a still higher consideration, and to submit to it as the Institute of Christ, and as such, having the sanction of his high authority, and the promise of his special blessing.

5. The testimony which we have exhibited also, embraces the *Civil relations* of man. It is not political, in the popular sense of this word; but we are not ashamed to avow the sentiment that the word of God is the supreme standard of the political conduct of men, in every thing respecting morality and religion, whether they be viewed individually, or in a corporate capacity; and this sentiment is founded

upon the fact, that God has given in his word, plain, numerous, and diversified precepts, in reference to man's civil relations, which we are not at liberty to disregard. The acknowledged importance of this subject, and the difficulty felt in all discussions on it, would suggest the wish, that divine wisdom and authority should interpose their sanction. The goodness of God might foster the expectation that it would be so. And when he has interposed, it is due to the divine authority to receive and obey his will, and to the divine goodness to regard this will as making the best provision for human happiness. Nor have the civil communities of men, or those who rule them, any thing to fear from genuine Christianity. It does not interfere with previous moral obligations and institutions, excepting in so far as it throws upon them a clearer light, and confirms them with its peculiar sanctions; it will supply the surest bond of social union, nourish and cherish the social virtues, afford the most salutary and effective check against the abuse of power, and promote obedience and subordination. It will give dignity to the throne, energy and stability to the government, and promote and diffuse peace and felicity among the people. Hypocrites, who are destitute of religion, may assume its garb to deceive and oppress, and persons under the influence of false views, may, in the name of Christianity, persecute and destroy; but these things are not to be laid to the charge of uncorrupted christianity, whose spirit breathes peace on earth, and good-will toward men. Prevailing ignorance, immorality, infidelity, and division, may place society in a state that it cannot avail itself of the advantages to be derived from the ascendancy of the christian religion in the laws and counsels of nations. But is not such a state to be deplored? What Christian can suppress the wish and the prayer, that the principles of pure and undefiled religion may so leaven mankind, that they shall enact their laws, and appoint their rulers, in agreeableness to it? Why should we argue from a disordered state of things, and from prevailing abuses, against a principle which all christians wish to see adopted and acted upon, and which the word of God assures us shall finally prevail? For communities and their rulers absolutely to neglect the interests of religion, and of the kingdom of

Christ, is to be wanting in duty to the Redeemer, and to omit that which above all things is calculated to promote their prosperity. We avow, then, the obligation of the word of God, over the nations and their rulers, and the subjection of both to the Head of all principality and power. We have protested against the violation of this principle, in different particulars, by the nation at the Revolution. We still protest against abuses of every description; but we dare not proscribe a sacred principle, which equally involves the divine glory, the honour of Messiah, and the interests of mankind. When we cast an eye upon the distracted state of the kingdoms, we cannot help regarding religion as that alone which can heal them, and the kingdom of Christ, appreciated and embraced, as that alone which can consolidate their peace, and union, and prosperity. "He shall judge thy people with righteousness and thy poor with judgment. The mountains shall bring peace to the people; and the little hills by righteousness. Yea, all kings shall fall down before him, all nations shall serve him. For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish, yea, these nations shall be utterly wasted." It is true, the special kingdom of the Redeemer is not of this world; but it is equally true, that the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ.

6. We have also to remark, that the great and leading truths of our testimony, have been embraced *in solemn covenant* with God. Ours is a testimony for the covenanted Reformation in Britain and Ireland. Divine truth has, in itself, a supreme authority over all to whom it is revealed. It has a claim to be believed with the heart and confessed with the mouth. But a distinct and superadded obligation arises from a solemn profession and engagement. This obligation is recognized in the word of God, in the transactions between man and man, and in those between God and man. It is specially brought into view in the transactions between God and Israel, in the capacities of a church and a commonwealth: the successive generations of which were held identified with their predecessors, both in respect of privilege and obligation. "He found him in Bethel, and there he spake with us. He turned the sea

into dry land. They went through the flood on foot: there did WE rejoice in him. The Lord our God made a covenant with US in Horeb. The Lord made not this covenant with our fathers, but with US, even US, who are all of US here alive this day." Hos. xii. 4. Psal. lxvi. 6. Deut. v. 2, 3. How can posterity claim privileges, and plead promises, if they cast obligations behind their back?

Our fathers in the ages that are past consulted not only for themselves but for posterity, in the reformation which they achieved, and to the prosecution of which they pledged themselves. In the National Covenant of Scotland, the errors, idolatries, and tyranny of Rome, were renounced, and a solemn pledge given to defend and preserve the Reformed religion. In the Solemn League, a similar pledge was given for the preservation of the reformed religion in the church of Scotland, in doctrine, worship, discipline, and government, against common enemies, and the reformation of religion in the kingdoms of England and Ireland, according to the word of God. The National Covenant of Scotland was directed against Popery, and the Solemn League and Covenant was specially directed against Prelacy, or the government of the church by Archbishops, Bishops, and all other unauthorized officers belonging to that hierarchy. Viewing Popery and Prelacy in the light of the Scriptures, we find them condemned by their letter and spirit; and contemplating them in the light of history and observation, we know that they have exercised, and do exercise, a most pernicious influence upon the church, and upon society. Our forefathers were warranted, from the evil character and tendencies of these systems, to renounce them as they did; and they were loudly called by the peculiar circumstances in which they were placed, to put themselves in attitude of defence against that ascendancy which these systems, sought, plotted, and attempted to obtain, under the secret countenance of rank, and wealth, and power. In doing so they did well; and we owe to them, under God, our present civil and religious liberties. As we profess to identify ourselves with the generations that are past, in their covenants, and in their subsequent contendings for the truth, so we should recognize and feel the obligation of truth, and of vows. These covenants

have been treated with the utmost contempt, and those adhering to them persecuted unto death; and even when Providence did put a stop to bloody persecution, the nation set them aside, and the church suffered them to fall into neglect. We fear to participate in the guilt of this conduct; and we lift our testimony against the sin; and we call upon ourselves and others to remember that the God with whom we have to do, is the great and dreadful God, keeping the covenant and mercy to them that love him and keep his commandments, and the jealous God who visits the iniquities of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generations of them that hate him; a God who brings his sword, or other instrument of his displeasure, to avenge the quarrel of his covenant. Shall we break the covenant and escape?

7. Our testimony has been *sealed with the blood of faithful martyrs.* This indeed is not the first consideration by which any doctrine is commended to our approbation. A martyr's blood can give no authority to error. But when scriptural truth is held fast to the death, the blood of martyrs supplies a special obligation. "The blood of thy martyr Stephen." "Antipas was my faithful martyr." It cannot be denied that our land is stained with martyrs' blood. Without going back to the period of the reformation from Popery, we refer to the blood that was shed from the time of the restoration of the 2d Charles, till the Revolution, comprehending a period of twenty-eight years, during which it is computed, eighteen thousand Presbyterians were subjected to severe sufferings. And for what did they suffer? They could not acknowledge the supremacy which the king had usurped over the church, and which was confirmed to him by national acts—they could not submit to the Episcopal hierachy and superstitions—they could not renounce, as treasonable and unlawful, the covenants in which prelacy had been abjured—they could not give allegiance to power vested with supremacy over the church, depriving her of her liberties, and persecuting her members to the death. The page of impartial history testifies that these were the chief grounds on account of which the martyrs suffered. Their blood was shed like water in our land. The adherents to episcopacy, and the flatterers

of royalty, basking in its sunshine, may chime the stale charges of rebellion and treason, and contrive apologies for a barbarous persecution, which should make them blush, and feel appalled; but these things will no longer deceive. The Presbyterians in Scotland know, or should know, and feel otherwise. And the moral and scriptural question in connexion with this subject is, At whose hands is this blood to be required? Has the nation repented of it, has the professing church of God given a faithful testimony against it? or do we in days of comparative ease remain silent, and content ourselves with building the tombs and garnishing the sepulchres of the righteous, and saying, if we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets? The subject is solemn. The moral Ruler makes inquisition for blood. He will avenge the blood of his servants. The lapse of a century of years or more will not remove the guilt of shedding innocent and righteous blood, nor exempt posterity, if found partakers in it, from the consequences. Blood cries to God from the ground, and will continue to cry till it is heard. And if God do not find repentance, we may expect that he will assuredly avenge the blood of his servants.

8. We have yet to remark, that important truths in our testimony have been *publicly departed from*, and the cause of the reformation seriously injured. This is, indeed, the immediate occasion of our assuming, and occupying our position of Dissent. Believing it to be our duty to identify ourselves with our fathers, in times of reformation, and in times of suffering for the truths of Christ, we are constrained, from conviction, to adhere to the views of the minority, who dissented from the conduct of the nation and the church at the Revolution. Not to say any thing here of the sin of overlooking entirely the acts of the Reforming Scottish Parliament, and of leaving them under the degradation of an infamous rescission, we cannot shut our eyes from the fact, that in direct opposition to the public covenants, to the word of God upon which they were founded, and to the struggles and blood of the martyrs, Prelacy was re-established in England and Ireland, and the crown of Britain re-invested with supremacy over the church. We also dis-

approve of the Church of Scotland having received her Presbyterian Constitution, and her Confession, from the state, instead of acting on her own intrinsical authority, and immediately recognizing the supremacy of Jesus and of his law. We disapprove of her refusing to recognize the work of God in the reformation, commencing in the year 1638, and of her not condemning its subsequent sinful overthrow, and the cruel persecution of those who adhere to it. The civil supremacy over the church was not condemned, nor the exclusive headship of Christ asserted, as they should have been. The public covenants were not acknowledged; and after a short time, the liberty of the church, in the election of her ministers, was timidly and faithlessly surrendered into foreign hands. The evils resulting from these departures from scriptural truth and reformation have been great, and continue still to be felt; and they loudly call, "Remember whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works." We rejoice to observe that the minds of many are now awakened to these things, and shall still more rejoice to see faithful efforts prosecuted till they shall be crowned with success, and the scattered friends of the Redeemer rallied, and united under one standard for his interest. We cannot view the re-establishment of Episcopacy, and of the civil supremacy over the church, the neglect of the public covenants, and the surrender of the church's liberty as minor concerns. A dissent, under a testimony for the truth, however painful in itself, we still consider to be our present duty, and we view it as intimately connected with the glory of Christ, the good of Zion, the prosperity of our country, and the happiness of man.

7. In closing our general observations, we beg to remark, that we view the principles which we have exhibited, as forming an excellent *ground-work for further reformation*. Attached as we are to the Reformation, we do not hold it out as perfection. The word of God is perfect. It admits of no improvement. We may neither add to it, nor diminish from it, nor change it in any way. It is not so with the Reformation. As compared with the state of religion in these lands, antecedently to its commencement, it was a great attainment. And when we compare it with the state

of things which has succeeded, it retains a decided superiority; and it were equally the duty and the wisdom of the church and nation to return to it. Still the reformation was not perfect. It had been little more than begun. There was not time to have it completed and consolidated, when, in the mysteries of Providence it was stopped, undermined, and persecuted. But it contains, in our views, the great elementary principles which lie at the basis of the prosperity which we expect in future days. It provides for the duty and interest of man as an individual, and as a member of society. It provides for the prosperity of the church, and of the kingdoms of the earth. And it provides for all this, by subjecting men, in all relations, to a perfect rule, and to one rightful Sovereign; and by bringing the original law of love to God and to man into full operation, in appropriate institutions, offices, relations, and duties, it promises to bind up the wound of the daughter of Zion, and to heal the breaches of society, under the reign of Him who is the Truth and Peace. This blessed consummation may the Lord hasten in his time!

We make no apology for exhibiting our Testimony, having acted from a conviction of truth, and a sense of duty. Other Christians will allow to us the liberty which they claim for themselves, of professing that system of divine truth which we deem to be in nearest accordance with the supreme standard, and of adhering to it, till one more comprehensive and faithful shall appear. The doctrines of our testimony have not the charm of novelty: they have been confessed by our fathers, and some of them sealed with their blood. It is not, however, their antiquity, nor the blood of our fathers, but their accordance with the Scriptures, which is the primary ground of our attachment. In making this profession, we arrogate to ourselves no superiority in Christian character and attainment; as if we were holier and did more than others. We appreciate the talent, piety, and benevolence of Christians in other churches. We lament the divisions which unhappily prevail, and would mourn over them as tokens of the divine displeasure. And, while we assign a reason for the preference which we give to the reformation cause, we are humbled, when we behold the defects in vital spirituality

and visible sanctity which attach to ourselves as well as others. We cannot admit that the views which we have taken are contracted, and illiberal. They comprehend the whole range of faith and practice, and provide, in a greater extent, than any other system we have seen, for the personal, the social, the temporal, the spiritual, and the eternal interests of the human family. Nor can we admit the justice of the charge that our sentiments are unpatriotic or anarchical. We love the country that has given us birth and privileges, and know not how to consult better for its prosperity and happiness, than by striving to diffuse the knowledge of pure and undefiled religion. We are friends of order and peace; and we know not how to give better security to these interests, in the adjustment and subordination of society, than by a faithful application of the principles of Scripture, in all their amplitude and impartiality. We are not ignorant of the odium that has long been attached to the cause we have professed. But not judging of a cause, by the popularity or reproach in which it is held, we wish to prove all things, by the infallible standard, and to hold fast that which is good. Having endeavoured to ascertain, by an application of the proper test, the cause of the Redeemer, we esteem it our duty and honour to go forth to him, even without the camp, bearing his reproach. And assured that truth shall yet prevail, we endeavour to be faithful to her interests.

In thus exhibiting our Testimony, for what we consider to be the cause of Christ, we have our eyes on the past, on the present, and on the future. In the light of history we have learned, and our fathers have told us, the great things which the Lord hath done for his Church, and we gratefully record them. In the light of observation we reverentially regard the signs and events of the present day. And in the light of prediction, we look forward to the future, with trembling, and with high anticipations. Viewing all these aspects of time, in the light of the Scriptures, we desire to do our part in serving our generation, according to the will of God. We call upon ourselves to know well the truth, to yield ourselves to its sanctifying influence, and steadfastly to profess and adorn it. We cast an affectionate and earnest look to our rising youth,

inviting them to come to the help of the Lord, and to take our place. And we cast an anxious eye over the agitated face of Christian society, and beseech the friends of Christ to declare themselves, and to do their duty. And we lift up an imploring eye to heaven, that the Lord may look down and behold from the habitation of his holiness, and of his glory. "Thou shalt arise and have mercy upon Zion; for the time to favour her, yea, the set time is come. For thy servants take pleasure in her stones, and favour the dust thereof." May the Lord, in the never-failing resources of his providence and Spirit, cause "the old wastes to be built, and raise up the former desolations—the desolations of many generations."

"Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces; that ye may tell it to the generation following. For this God is our God for ever and ever, he will be our guide, even unto death."

"UNTO HIM BE GLORY, IN THE CHURCH, BY CHRIST JESUS, THROUGHOUT ALL AGES, WORLD WITHOUT END. AMEN."

NOTES.

I. Election.—Chap. IV.

Human pride is the chief spring of objection to this doctrine. The existence of the objection which the apostle Paul so triumphantly repels, has the force of a thousand arguments on the subject: "Thou wilt then say unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? for who hath resisted his will? Nay, but O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed, say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump, to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?" Rom. ix. 19—21. This passage clearly evinces that the above doctrine is taught in the Scripture; for it is the only one against which such an objection could have the most distant semblance of plausibility. And the manner in which the apostle answers it, confirms the doctrine, as a nail fastened in a sure place. He answers the objection, not by explaining and modifying the doctrine, as if it had been misapprehended, but by a direct challenge on the subject of divine sovereignty. The objection and the answer are equally absurd, on any other principle than the truth of the doctrine in question. The fact that it is still upon the same principle, that the doctrine is chiefly objected against, shows the sameness, in all ages, of the depravity of the human mind, and of the objections made against the doctrines of the gospel. Writers and preachers of the Arminian school, represent election as merely *national*, yet seem to forget that even this is liable to the very same objection as a sovereign personal election.

If the sovereignty which confers salvation on one individual, and not on another, be liable to objection on the score of the divine character, the extension of this to a great multitude of individuals, a district, or a people, is liable, even in a greater degree, to the same objection. Nor will the matter be mended by having recourse to the doctrine of an election only to the external means of salvation; for this, though it seems to reserve something for human merit, by no means removes the difficulty, inasmuch as the means of salvation are privileges denied to others. These views are very dangerous, as they hide from the eye of man the true doctrine of sovereign grace, conferring upon the unworthy the gift of eternal life by Jesus Christ.

II. Sonship of Christ.—Chap. V.

When bearing our testimony to the doctrine of the person of Christ, we are constrained not only to declare our belief in the divinity of Christ, but in his proper sonship. Our belief rests on the direct evidence of the Scripture testimony. The expression, *the only begotten of the Father*, is used synonymously with *the Word*—a character which Christ had antecedently to his incarnation. John i. 14. "The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of *the only begotten* of the Father.)" Christ Jesus is the Son of God antecedently to his mission, incarnation, or manifestation, "God *sent forth* HIS SON." Gal. iv. 4. "God *sent forth* HIS SON into the world to condemn the world." John iii. 17. "For this purpose the SON OF GOD *was manifested* that he might destroy the works of the devil." 1 John iii. 8. His character as the Son of God is represented in the Scriptures as preceding the constitution of his official character—giving dignity to his office—and efficacy to his sufferings. "The law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, *maketh* THE SON (High Priest) who is consecrated for evermore." Heb. vii. 28. "We have a great *High Priest* that is passed into the heavens, *Jesus the* SON OF God." Heb. iv. 14. "The *blood of Jesus*

Christ HIS SON cleanseth us from all sin." 1 John i. 7. This name stands associated with divine persons in the administration of baptism, and signifies the divine person of the Saviour. Mat. xxviii. 19. And the love of God is represented as receiving an inexpressible character from the relation to himself of him whom he gave to save the world. "God *so loved the world that he gave* HIS ONLY BEGOTTEN SON." John iii. 16.

Every believer should be able to answer his Lord's question, "But whom say ye that I am?" in the words of Peter, "Thou art Christ the Son of the living God;" or in the language of the eunuch, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." This view of Christ is greatly important, as bearing upon the revealed character of the immediate object of faith, and entering into the first confessions of faith. John vi. 69, iii. 18, xx. 31, Acts viii. 37, 1 John iv. 15, &c. How will the confession of a believer in the deity of Christ be distinguished from that of him who refuses it, if there is nothing in the term Son, expressive of divine character? It is true, that faith does not fix merely upon the abstract idea of the peculiar divine personality of Christ Jesus. It contemplates this personality invested with office, manifested in flesh and blood, and having made atonement for sin. But there is not one of these ideas that is an object of faith, or a source of comfort to the sinner, if abstracted from the deity of Christ. The Messiah is divine, which is the same with his being the Son of God; only the latter expression points out the distinctive character of his divine person. Jesus Christ is called, in the Scriptures, the Son of God, and this Son of God is sent to be the Saviour of the world. "We have seen and do testify that the Father *sent* the SON to be the Saviour of the world." 1 John iv. 14.

III. COVENANT OF REDEMPTION AND GRACE.—CHAP. VI.

A dispute has been maintained on the subject of two distinct covenants; a covenant of redemption between the Father and the Son, on the condition of his fulfilling all

righteousness, and a covenant of grace between the sinner and God, on the condition of faith. In correct language, this distinction cannot be vindicated; yet it does not involve any essential error, as it is admitted that faith is connected, by divine appointment, in the order of means, with our actual interest in the covenant.

The unity of the covenant of grace ought ever to be kept in view. It is always spoken of in the singular number, excepting in some passages, where the different dispensations of it are alluded to. Rom. ix. 4., Eph. ii. 12. We read particularly of the blood of the covenant. The covenant is one, and the way of our acceptance with God is one: and it is important that Christ and his seed should always be viewed as one; a fact which the doctrine of two covenants is calculated to obscure. Christ had no private personal relation to the covenant. He acted as the representative of the elect. To make faith the condition of the covenant is improper, because it was not the condition required of Christ —because the unregenerate cannot believe—because faith itself is provided in the covenant—and because it is not of the nature of a condition, for the office of faith is to receive, and not to render unto God any thing in the way of merit.

The covenant is not made with us, as it was made with Christ, in the way of proposing conditions. We have to do solely with its blessings, as exhibited in the promises and offer of the gospel. Nor is there a secret mysterious making of the covenant with the soul, distinct from the revelation of it to faith in the gospel. Christ is *given* for a covenant of the people. God says, in the gospel, "I will make with you an everlasting covenant, even the sure mercies of David." Such is the gospel testimony, by which the covenant is made with us. And we are called only to believe it. There is a difference, indeed, between the gift *offered* and the gift *received*. The former is the privilege of all who enjoy the dispensation of the gospel; the latter, the benefit only of those who believe. The former is a visible external privilege, the latter an invisible and internal benefit. The sinner does nothing more than believe in that testimony, in which God is said to make the covenant with us. It is by faith in the covenant, as revealed in the gospel, and not by some new making of it with the soul, that the believer is

actually interested in it, and may say, "The Lord hath made with me an everlasting covenant." At the same time, it is not denied, that faith is the appointed means of interest in the covenant—or that covenanting with God, upon the footing of the covenant of grace, belongs unto the nature and exercise of true godliness. Nor is it designed to accuse those, who retain the terms covenant of grace and covenant of redemption, of holding views radically erroneous of the doctrines of grace. When the terms are explained, the views entertained on both sides identify. The chief objection is against the phraseology.

IV. Saving Faith.—Chap. IX.

Great disputes have been agitated on the subject of saving faith. Many resolve it into merely the assent of the mind to the speculative truths of the gospel testimony, denying that faith appropriates its object, the Lord Jesus Christ. This general view of saving faith seems to be alike incompatible with the nature of the case, and with the Scripture representations of the subject. The Scriptures address man upon subjects of the last importance, affecting most deeply his personal and eternal interest. He cannot truly believe in his danger, without fear—in the way of escape, without fleeing to it—in the inestimable blessings of the gospel offered to him, without accepting them. The sinner is called to *look* unto Christ, to *incline* his ear and *come* unto him, *to flee* from the wrath to come. The believer receives Christ Jesus the Lord, Col. ii. 6. He eats the flesh of the Son of man, John vi. 53. He is *persuaded* that Christ is able to keep what is *committed* to him, 1 Tim. i. 12. He *embraces* the promises, Heb. xi. 13. He *trusts* in Christ, Eph. i. 12. He believes *with the heart* unto righteousness, Rom. x. 9. Saving faith includes an intellectual belief of the doctrines of the gospel; but this is not all. Faith is an exercise of the soul as possessed not only of understanding, but of will and affection. It is an embracing, and resting on the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation. A persuasion of the truth of the divine mission of Jesus Christ,

and of the speculative doctrines of the gospel, may be in the mind without saving faith. Simon believed and was baptized, while his heart was not right with God. A man may believe that food can nourish him; yet if he have no appetite and do not eat, he will die of want. A person may believe that garments would cover him; yet if he feel no inconvenience from nakedness and do not put them on, he may perish from cold. One may see a refuge that would shelter him from evil; yet if he see no danger, and do not run for protection, he may be at last surprised with destruction. It is worthy of notice, that the blessings of the gospel are represented under the images of food, clothing, and protection from danger; and faith by the corresponding acts of eating, putting on, and fleeing for refuge. As unfeigned precious faith is essentially connected with an interest in salvation, it is the imperative duty of every one to examine himself whether he be in the faith, by considering its Scripture characters and evidences. "Hast thou faith? have it to thyself before God."

V. Church Government.—Chap. XII.

The sentiment, that there are no intimations of the will of Christ on the subject of church government, appears to us incompatible with the necessities of the church—with the love and wisdom of her Head—with his revealed character, as having the key of David, ordering and establishing his kingdom with judgment and with justice—and is contrary to the fact that the Scriptures do contain declarations on this subject, that are neither obscure nor ambiguous. The Redeemer, knowing well all the circumstances in which the church can be placed, has given in his word certain principles of order and government, wisely adapted to every situation. These principles, distinguished by their wisdom, and sanctioned by the gracious authority of Christ, ought to be ascertained, acted upon, and preserved inviolate.

Episcopalians claim for Bishops authority over many congregations and ministers, regarding them as vested with an exclusive right of ordination, and assigning to them great

secular power and dignity. The *overseers* or *Bishops*, of whom we read in the New Testament, are the same with presbyters or elders; the terms, being used synonymously, are convertible titles for the same office. Acts xx. 17, 28. The persons called elders in the 17th verse, are called overseers (or bishops) in the 28th. Tit. i. 5, 7. Titus is directed to ordain elders, persons of certain qualifications, assigning as a reason for this specification of character, that a bishop ought to be blameless as the steward of God. 1 Pet. v. 1, 2. The elders are exhorted to feed the flock of God, taking the oversight thereof; *i. e.* according to the meaning of the original word, exercising the office or functions of a bishop over them. The three orders in the church of England, *Bishops*, *Priests*, and *Deacons*, have no appointment in the New Testament; Bishop being the same with the Pastor; Priest being never applied to office; and Deacon being another office altogether. There is not, in the Christian church, any officer, having power or superiority above the teaching presbyter. The principle upon which this superiority is claimed, is in express contradiction to the precept of the Saviour, Mat. xx. 25—27; and the fact of the possession of such superiority cannot be established from the Scriptures, either in the case of Peter, or of any other apostle. It is vain to found such a claim upon the infallible inspiration, and extraordinary powers, of the apostles. And as to Archbishops, Diocesan bishops, Archdeacons, Deans, Prebendaries, &c. it is enough to say, that they have neither a name, nor the shadow of a place, in the Scriptures.

From a strong perception of the unrighteousness of prelatic or papal authority, and from a sense of the incompatibility of subjection to such authority with Christian liberty and a good conscience, the mind may run to an opposite extreme, and contract an aversion to the legitimate authority which Christ has ordained for edification. Here Presbyterians have walked between the opposite extremes into which Episcopalians and Independents have gone.

Presbyterians derive their principles from a few plain Scriptural facts. 1st. They find a distinction between *rulers* and *ruled*, 1 Thess. v. 13. Heb. xiii. 7, 17, &c. 2d. They find the work of ruling connected with *elders*, 1 Tim.

v. 17. 3d. They find in the regular organization of the Christian church a *plurality* of elders, Acts xiv. 23, Tit. i. 5. 4th. They find a distinction between elders who only rule, and those who labour in word and doctrines. 1 Tim. v. 17. From the duties required of the teaching elder, and from the support which he must receive from the church, that he may give exclusive attendance on the duties of his office, it is unreasonable to suppose, that there could be a plurality of them, in each of the primitive churches.

On the subject of superior courts, Presbyterians not only reason, from the unity of the church, and the necessity of a government embracing the whole—and, from the reasonableness, propriety, and advantages of such institutions—but they appeal to facts recorded in the New Testament. 1st. The Scriptures speak of the church at Jerusalem—at Antioch—at Ephesus—and at Corinth. Acts viii. 1, xiii. 1, xx. 28. Rev. ii. 1, 1 Cor. i. 2. 2d. In each of these places, there were several distinct worshipping assemblies. This latter fact is not asserted in so many words, but it is deduced from the Scripture statements in the respective cases. Take, for example, the case of the church at Jerusalem. Three thousand on one day; five thousand on another; and after this, multitudes, men and women, were added to the church. Acts ii. iii. iv. The number of disciples still greatly increased. Multitudes were added to the Lord, and they remained in peace at Jerusalem, until the persecution recorded, Acts viii. Again, "the churches had rest throughout all Judea." The word of the Lord increased and multiplied. There were in Jerusalem several *myriads*, Acts xxi. 20. The doctrine is confirmed by considering the diversity of languages, which required their meeting in different places—the multitude of apostles, prophets, and elders that remained at Jerusalem—as also, the limited accommodations which they had for assembling. This vast number of persons, who could not assemble under one roof, form the church at Jerusalem, and are never called the churches. Acts ii. 47, v. 11, viii. 1, xii. 5, xx. 4. And by a similar process of reasoning from the facts in the other cases, the same conclusion will be drawn.

We refer to the Scriptures for the authority of a congregational session, Acts xiv. 23. There must be elders in

every church. Mat. xviii. 15—20. The church in this passage, signifies not the multitude, but the two or three gathered together in the name of Christ, for judgment. That the term church should signify the elders of the church, is no uncommon use of language. Nation often signifies the rulers of the nation. The *congregation* and the *elders* are used synonymously, as may be seen by comparing Num. xxxv. 24, 25, with Deut. xix. 11, 12. And with respect to a Presbytery, we distinctly refer to the Holy Scriptures for the name and the thing. 1 Tim. iv. 14; Acts xx. 17, 28; xv. 2, &c. And with respect to higher courts than a Presbytery, we consider that we have authority in the example recorded in the 15th chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. 1st. We cannot suppose that assembly acting under the extraordinary inspiration of the Holy Ghost; for upon this supposition it was altogether unnecessary, one apostle delivering an inspired decision, being sufficient to determine the question. In the original discussion at Antioch, Paul and Barnabas acted as ordinary ministers—the reference was made, not only to the apostles, but to the elders—and the reference was discussed. "Synods," says Dr. Owen, "are consecrated unto the use of the church, in all ages, by the example of the apostles, in their guidance of the first churches of the Jews and Gentiles." 2d. The whole members of the church at Jerusalem did not enact the authoritative decree. This is impossible; they could not meet in one assembly. Besides, they had no authority over the churches of Syria. 3d. It was a meeting of the elders of the church. The reference was made to the apostles and elders—the apostles and elders came together—the decrees were ordained of the apostles and elders. The *whole church* and the *brethren*, as they cannot signify the whole church literally, must be explained in harmony with the scope of the passage.

It would not be difficult to expatiate on various excellencies, by which the Presbyterian government is recommended; but it is the divine authority, expressed as above, that binds our consciences. For the evils, which men may have associated with it, we are not accountable. For its grand principles of *representation*, *union*, and *subordination*, we contend; not for every iota of the forms which churches

may have adopted. It is against the abuses of presbytery, chiefly, that objections have been raised. Separate the things of man improperly connected with it, remove from it the reproaches which its professors, by the improper management of it, or by their personal conduct otherwise, have brought upon it; and let it be seen in its scriptural simplicity and purity, and its enemies will not be so numerous. The approaches to Presbyterian practice among Independents, in the formation of associations and unions, the education of youth for the ministry, and the recommendation of them to the church, and in the ordination of pastors by the imposition of the hands of presbyters of other churches, afford hope that the time is coming, when the grand principles of Presbyterianism shall form a foundation for keeping the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace in the church of God; the prejudices and alienations which the collisions of party have produced and cherished being laid aside.

We give our testimony in behalf of Presbyterian church-government, because its principles are laid down and exemplified in the Scriptures. It is commended to us, not merely by the wisdom and profession of our forefathers, but by the love and wisdom of the King of Zion, and by the sanction of his supreme authority. And we contend for it in its scripture purity and liberty. We protest against all dictation to the church, by the civil authorities, on the subject of her faith and government—against all civil control in things spiritual over her ministers, and over the assemblies of her ministers and elders—and against all interference whatever with the liberty of her people to choose their office-bearers.

VI. Patronage.—Chap. XI.

The rights vested in patrons we protest against, as—a violation of natural equity—incompatible with the liberty of the gospel—hurtful to christian edification—and contrary to scriptural principle and example, Acts i. 15—26; vi. 2

—7 ; xiv. 23.*—to the practice of the primitive church—and to the principles of our Reformation. The amount of injury produced by patronage under its various forms, it is impossible to declare. In despite of worldly policy and unworthy timidity, the church is called to assert and to use her liberty without compromise or foreign control, leaving all consequences in the hands of her Head.

VII. Liberty of Conscience.—Chap. XII.

We pointedly declare that conscience is subject to no Lord but Christ. Every disciple has liberty to profess all the truths, to observe all the institutions, and to obey all the precepts of Christianity. This is at once his right, and duty, and privilege. Kings, and bishops, and ecclesiastic officers, have no authority to prescribe to conscience. It is subject to Christ alone, and is entirely free from all subjection to the traditions and commandments of men. To worship God—to erect and organize congregations—to furnish them with pastors—to celebrate all the ordinances of religion—and to meet in the consistories of judgment, without control from man, are sacred immunities of the Christian church. But we must not confound the rights of a good conscience with the claims of an evil one. "God alone is Lord of the conscience, and has left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men, which are in any thing contrary to his word, or beside it, in matters of faith and worship. So that, to believe such doctrines, or to obey such commands, out of conscience, is to betray true liberty of conscience: and the requiring of an implicit faith, and an absolute and blind obedience, is to destroy liberty of conscience and reason also."—Con. XX. 2.

But it is necessary, in pleading the rights of conscience and private judgment, to guard against destroying the exercise of lawful power. All delegated power is under law to Him, from whom it originates, and is to be sub-

* The word rendered *ordained*, Acts xiv. 23, signifies *chosen*, by lifting up the hand, and is so translated, 2 Cor. viii. 19.

mitted to, only as agreeable to this law. To resist lawful power in the exercise of lawful authority, is to resist God: "Whosoever, therefore, resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God." Conscience is not without law to God, and of consequence cannot resist with impunity, the lawful exercise of divinely instituted and constituted authority. That God has delegated the parental, ecclesiastical, and magistratical authorities; and that these are to be obeyed for conscience sake, cannot be denied. Eph. vi. 1; Heb. iii. 17; Rom. xiii. 5. "And because the powers which God hath ordained, and the liberty which Christ hath purchased, are not intended by God to destroy, but mutually to uphold and preserve one another; they who, upon pretence of Christian liberty, shall oppose any lawful power, or the lawful exercise of it, whether it be civil or ecclesiastical, resist the ordinance of God." Con. xx. 4. To resist the lawful exercise of lawful authority, under pretence of liberty of conscience, is obviously to set the authority of God in opposition to itself. Man has no natural inherent rights of his own. All his rights are derived from God, are of course subject to his law, and are to be defined and regulated by it. A right in opposition to his own law, God does not, cannot give; nor is it competent to any power to impart and sanction such a right. It is no more the right of a man to worship an idol, or to blaspheme the name of God, than to kill or to steal, although he may judge it proper to do all of them. In such a case, the exercise of ecclesiastical authority, in excluding idolatrous and profane persons from the communion of the church, is not esteemed an infringement upon the rights of conscience. Sentiments declared in opposition to the righteous terms on which a society is formed, exclude from its privileges. And may not the same reasoning apply to the exercise of magistratical authority, in restraining overt transgressions of the law of God? When civil society has, by its own consent, embodied in its constitution the laws of God in the first table, as it is under obligation to do, as well as those in the second, it is inconsistent with the subjection of conscience to the divine law, as well as with the principles upon which society is formed, to plead for a right to violate these laws. A civil ruler cannot prosecute any offence as a scandal in

the church exposing to her censures; but an open immorality, in direct violation of the law of God, as embodied with the civil constitution, he may restrain as a crime. And that not merely upon the principle of utility, because the evils restrained are prejudicial to society, but from the subjection which civil society, as such, owes to God. We are assured from the goodness and wisdom of God, that no laws are so good for the interests of society, as the laws which he has given. But this is not the primary reason of the obligation to obey them, as is well expressed in the following words: "That whatever is punishable by man, is injurious to man, is true; because all sin in some way or other is so; but to make this *the sole ground* or *reason* of punishment is selfish and atheistical. It is making ourselves the chief end; whereas this is what God claims to himself at the hand of every man, and body of men. In punishing man for immorality, he ought not merely to regard his own safety, nor even that of the community, but the honour of God; and, if he be a good man, he will do so. If he regard merely his own safety, punishing crimes only in so far as they endanger it, the people will soon perceive that he is a selfish tyrant, and cares not for the general good; and if he regard only the public safety, punishing crimes merely on account of their being injurious unto man, it is still a spirit of selfishness, only a little more extended, and God will disapprove of this as the people do of the other."

The authority of the civil magistrate respects chiefly external actions, and these evidently opposed to the law of heaven, and the constitutional laws of the kingdom. It is objected against all magistratical interference, in any thing connected with the first table of the law, that it is persecution. But the restraint of an open and gross immorality is not persecution. In this restraint no right is invaded. Were the magistrate to act upon his own private opinion, and by a despotic sovereignty, in violation of the law of God and the constitution, the complaint would be well-founded. But while he only exercises the power committed to him, the charge alleged cannot apply to him, but to the constitution, and to the community framing and adopting it. The evil does not arise from the employment of magis-

tratical authority; for upon the same principle every exercise of parental or ecclesiastical authority might be called persecution. The question of persecution resolves itself into another, respecting the rights of man; and this brings us to the law of God, the standard of these rights. And as no man has a right to violate the law of God, the restraint of an open violation invades no right, is no persecution. But it is asked, Who is judge? This question may be answered by another: Who is judge in ecclesiastical law? Who is judge in the case of the breaches of the second table of the law? If there is a competence to judge and act in the one case, why not in the other? Is the law of God that unintelligible, ambiguous, and convertible thing, that no definite meaning can be assigned to it? The judge is, first, God himself, the great Lawgiver; and, secondly, it is the nation recognizing the divine law, embodying it in their constitution, and empowering their representatives to carry it into effect. It is not an individual usurping a right over society, but society, according to the ordinance of God, exercising authority over individuals, in terms of the divine law and mutual compact. To plead for liberty to violate the law, would be to give an individual a negative over the voice of society, in those things which it has judged necessary for its safety and prosperity. Nor is this compulsion. The restraint, or punishment, of an immorality does not compel to the performance of the contrary virtues. If this were the case, there would be compulsion in the practice of honesty and veracity, because fraud and falsehood are interdicted and punished.

While jealous of the liberty of the church, and tender on the subject of liberty of conscience, we cannot acquiesce in the prevailing sentiment, that it is the common right of all men to worship God in the way they think proper. We speak here of man, not in the retirements of his chamber, where no human eye seeth him, but as a member of society, and visibly exerting an influence upon it. And in this view, few will assent to the above sentiment, without excepting from the liberty granted, principles and practices hurtful to society, or subversive of it. We go a little farther, and except from the above liberty, principles obviously in opposition to the moral law, and subversive

of the moral government of God. Principles of this kind, are hurtful to society; but this consideration, though necessarily connected with the subject, and important, is not to take the precedence of that honour which is due to God. We know that conformity to the will of God conduces to individual happiness and to the general good, in the highest degree; but we dare not lay utility, expediency, or self-interest, at the foundation of moral obligation. This foundation lies in the perfection of the divine nature, and in the revealed will of God. And when God has, in one department of his law, extended protection around the honour, and life, and purity, and property, and character of man, it is not easy to perceive that society owes nothing to God, or to the claims he has put forth, in another part of his law, in behalf of his own character and worship. Indeed, the interests of man and the divine glory are essentially connected with one another, although the one has a necessary precedency. Civil society, as an institution of God, owes it both to God and to itself, to define the rights of man and of the community, in agreeableness to the divine law; and to defend the rights of both from gross invasion, under whatsoever imposing pretence it may be made. This is, truly, a matter widely different from enforcing religion by civil pains, and propagating it by carnal weapons; things which we disavow and condemn!

VIII. Magistracy.—Chap. XIII.

In some particulars, the subject of this chapter is a peculiarity in our testimony for the truth. It is a part of Scripture revelation, and that too, a considerable part. It belongs to the Christian's daily duty, and is necessary to furnish the mind with proper principles and ends in the discharge of it—it is intimately connected with the happiness of man—it affects, very nearly, the prosperity or adversity of the church of Christ—it is connected with the

honour, and with the administrations of Messiah—and there are striking indications in Scripture of the future extensive subjection of the kingdoms of the world unto Christ—it has been embraced, in some parts of its principles, by those who have been honoured in advancing reformation—it has even, in some things connected with it, been a ground of suffering, and has thus been sealed with blood. It thus extensively involves the cause of the divine glory, the good of Zion, the happiness of man, and Christian duty. And we are not to be understood as contending for any particular form according to which civil government may be modelled, but for the moral and Scriptural principles upon which it should be based.

On this subject, there is a question, at present widely and keenly agitated. It is the power of the magistrate, in matters of religion. While we peremptorily disclaim that the civil ruler has power in and over the church of Christ, we cannot admit that, in his office, he has absolutely nothing to do with religion. From the evidence of Scripture, and in conformity with the sentiments of the churches of the reformation, we contend that communites, and their rulers, enjoying and professing Christianity, are under obligation to recognize and protect the kingdom of Christ; and this not only in their private and insulated, but in their official and corporate capacity. As explanatory of our views, we submit the following brief observations.

1. It is acknowledged to be difficult to define, precisely, the line and extent of the magistrate's power about religion. In everything connected with religion, the power of the magistrate is to be exercised with great caution and prudence, and in reference to evils viewed chiefly as violations of the divine law, or immoralities. At the commencement of an age of inquiry and reformation, and in an unsettled state of things, the people cannot be supposed to have matured their views, so as to frame a constitution empowering the magistrate to act in this matter: and acting officially on his own private views is entirely out of the question. But when religious reformation has been happily attained, and prosperity enjoyed under the blessing of God, it becomes the duty of a people to provide for its preservation and extension. And more especially in the case of attempts to

subvert religious reformation, it is imperatively required of a people to enact laws for its defence.

2. It ought to be observed in all reasoning upon this question, that although the term "magistrate's power" be used, it is not to be understood that the sword is to be employed against those who refuse to make a particular profession of religion. Exclusion from official place, where an undue influence against religion might be employed, is, ordinarily, all the length that civil power should go. Nor does this affect the life, property, common liberty or peace, of persons who are otherwise inoffensive members of society. If any find themselves aggrieved in this matter, it is not by magistratical usurpation, but by the execution of the law, which the people have put into the hands of the magistrate. Persons who, from scruples of conscience, cannot acquiesce in the constitution of the state, in things affecting religion, will not be the readiest to complain in this matter; while it will be for the interest of society, that ambitious and ungodly aspirants after dominion and power be intercepted, in their progress to places, where their principles, administration, and example, would have a demoralizing and pernicious influence. Nor, in this matter, are we to confound the just restraint of an obstinate and contemptuous blasphemer of religion, of God, and of everything sacred, and the exclusion of men of bad principles, from places of power, with allowing them to enjoy the protection of those rights which are common to men, while they do not, in the propagation of their principles, offend openly against the laws of God, and of society, and thus threaten the subversion of the one and the other. When such distinctions are kept out of sight, and it is assumed, without any just view of the appointment and limitation of the magistrate's power, that he is to be sole judge and umpire in matters of religion, a very unfair, a very false view is taken of the subject; a view, however, which serves well the purpose of declamation, which is too often substituted, on this subject, for candid and dispassionate argument. How indiscriminately have intolerance and sanguinary principles been imputed to those, who powerfully pled, and valiantly laid down their lives for those very liberties, which are abused to revile their memories!

3. It must be admitted, that the sentiment that excludes all concern with religion from the duty of the civil magistrate, is not the principle of the Westminster Confession.* Candour requires that the passages which have been objected against as Erastian, and as subjecting the church, in matters purely religious and ecclesiastical, to the civil magistrate, be explained in consistency with other parts of the Confession, and with the known sentiments of those who compiled and adopted it. For example, the power conceded to magistrates to call synods is explained by the Act of Assembly prefixed to the Confession, as applying to an unsettled state of things, while the intrinsic power of the church to assemble her synods is asserted. And the same thing is necessary in explaining those passages which have been construed as favouring magistratical compulsion in religion.

It is true that, in the reformation from Popery, provision was made for the preservation of the protestant religion; a thing required in itself, and specially called for, when the restless spirit of Popery was covertly putting forth all its energies to subvert the Protestant cause. Something is due to the memory of those who have done worthily in Ephratah, and been famous in Bethlehem, in the magnanimous struggle for religion and civil liberty. They were men, and had their faults, and are not to be held up as perfect, in all they said and did. In judging of the public conduct of the Scottish Reformers, it is but fair to take into account the very trying circumstances in which they were placed, the persecutions they endured, the plots which were frequently contrived for the subversion of religion and liberty at home, and the formidable combinations established among the popish powers on the continent to overthrow the protestant interest throughout Europe. When these things are duly considered, it will be conceded by every candid mind, that measures might have been necessary, in their peculiar circumstances, which would be unwarrantable in a more tranquil state of society. Yet, that we may guard against all danger of being misunderstood, we deem it proper to state distinctly, that we can neither give ourselves, nor require from others, a universal or unqualified approbation of all

* xx. 4; xxiii. 3; xxxi. 2. Cat. 108, 109.

the acts of Parliament, or of Assembly, during the reforming period.

But we cannot aquiesce in the charge which some prefer against the Westminster Confession and Catechisms, that they teach compulsory and persecuting principles in religion. If certain passages be at all liable to such unfavourable construction, candour requires that they be specified, explained by the connection in which they stand, by other passages in the Confession, and by the avowed principles of the Church of Scotland. But all exercise of civil authority about religion is not to be condemned; just provision for the defence of the Protestant religion and liberties, must not be stigmatised as intolerance and persecution; nor are the standards to be left under a vague and indefinite injurious allegation, which every enemy may turn against them as it pleases him.

It is not, however, primarily because it was the opinion of our fathers, and is the doctrine of the standards, that we contend for the subjection of civil communities and their rulers to the Messiah, and the obligation lying upon them to respect the religion of Jesus. To scripture authority we have made our appeal, acknowledging no other supreme authority over our consciences. Isa. xlix. 23; lx. 10, 12; Psal. ii. 10, 12; Dan. vii. 14; Psal. lxxii. 11; Rev. i. 5, &c. And while we consider that legal protection ought to be given to the religion of Christ, we cannot plead the same for the mysteries of Paganism—the rites of Mohammed—or the idolatry of Antichrist. And in contending for the principle upon which we make these exceptions, we cannot think that we expose ourselves to the charge of intolerance and persecution.

IX. Covenanting.—Chap. XIV.

We find the principle of social covenanting illustrated in the ordinary practices of men, and of communities. We view covenanting as a moral duty, based originally on the moral law; and we find it commanded and exemplified in

the Scriptures. We have intimation of it in the predictions relating to the times of the New Testament. It has been exemplified in the history of the church; and especially in the churches abroad, that separated from the communion of the church of Rome, and were distinguished by the names of Protestant and Reformed. And it has been exemplified, with the most happy effects in the public federal deeds of our own land.

Viewing covenanting as a moral duty, prescribed and exemplified in the word of God; considering that the design of the public covenants is an adherence to the Protestant Reformed religion, in opposition to Popery and Prelacy: and regarding the church, and the nation, as perpetuated in their posterity, and inheriting precious privileges, we cannot see that the obligation of these deeds has ceased with the age in which they were taken. The party sworn unto is the true God, the everlasting God, whose name and memorial are through all generations. The church and the nation, the parties that have lifted up their hands to the Lord, corporately considered, still exist. They have plighted their faith to maintain and promote the ends of these covenants in the most formal and solemn manner in which this could be done. An individual or a community, having even less valid claims upon the nation, would be warranted to assert and pursue them. And shall God, to whom we owe all our privileges, have no claims, or overlook them? Shall it be a matter of indifference to us, whether God "remember the covenant of our ancestors," or charge us with breaking the covenant which he made with them? Lev. xxv. 45; Jer. xi. 10.

The obligation, thus lying upon the church and the nation, has been criminally neglected and violated. At the revolution, the covenants were overlooked, and a civil supremacy over the church and prelacy in England and Ireland re-established, in direct opposition to the terms of these covenants. The obligation of them has been consigned to general neglect and oblivion. Many of those who contended for it, have now relinquished their testimony on this point, while not a few violently oppose their obligation altogether. In other cases the attention has been too exclusively confined to their ecclesiastical objects, and a sufficiently explicit

testimony has not been lifted up against the violation of them by these nations.

Feeling ourselves still bound to testify to the permanent obligation of the Public Covenants, and to prosecute their grand object to the utmost of our power, we cast a wishful eye to all the friends of the covenanted reformation in church and state, and lift up a prayer to God that he may put it into their and our hearts, to embrace, in a solemn covenant, the entire interests of the reformation, according to our circumstances. This would secure greater unity, publicity, confidence, and strength, in the profession of the cause of Christ; it would deepen the sense of obligation on our minds; it might arrest the attention of youth, and of a secure generation; it might serve to rally the friends of truth around one standard; and to preserve our own fidelity, and a testimony for the work of reformation, till the Lord arise to plead the cause that is his own, "Come and let us join ourselves unto the Lord in a perpetual covenant, that shall not be forgotten."

X. Testimony for Truth.—Chap. XV.

Many, in the present age, have imbibed strong prejudices against a public written Confession and Testimony. The churches which deny the use of creeds altogether, unless they admit every applicant who acknowledges the Bible, and does not openly and grossly violate its precepts, must act upon the principle of a creed. The dispute with them does not, therefore, turn upon the principle itself, but upon the manner in which it is to be carried into effect.

The propriety of exhibiting a testimony for truth will appear from the following things:—1. The character of witnesses given to the church, Isa. xliii. 10, 12. Acts i. 8. Rev. xi. 3.—2. Scripture injunctions, Mat. x. 32. Heb. iv. 14. x. 23.—3. The scriptural representations of the church, Zech. viii. 3. Psal. lx. 4. Song vi. 4. Isa. lxii. 10. 1 Tim. iii. 15.—4. The Scriptures recognize a testimony, 2 Tim. i. 8. Rev. vi. 9. xii. 17. xix. 10. xx. 4.—5. The conduct of enemies. They exhibit error and oppose truth. Ought

not the church, and her ministers, set for the defence of the gospel, to lift up a standard against them?

A profession, or testimony, founded upon Scripture—evangelical in its principles, and bearing on the interests of universal holiness—directed against error—sealed with the blood of faithful martyrs—embracing the particular word of Christ's patience—and all centring in Christ himself, will be eminently subservient to the glory of Christ, by uniting his friends, exhibiting truth to the world, counteracting error, and transmitting the knowledge of truth to posterity. Whether such a testimony should be left to float on tradition, and to be vaguely gathered from the writings of individuals, or should be exhibited in a written document, by the church in her collective capacity, can scarcely admit a doubt. Excepting for the preservation of the sacred Scriptures, we cannot suppose a nobler end to which the arts of writing and of printing can be devoted. The history of the Reformation illustrates how important to the interests of truth the Confessions or Testimonies of the reforming churches have been.

FINIS.

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